

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE.<sup>1</sup>

IT is so many years since I addressed an audience from this place, that, though once well known to the citizens of Exeter, I speak to you now almost as a stranger. The last time I stood here I was perhaps the oldest, and certainly not the least loyal or least admiring friend of your President, Sir Stafford Northcote: to-day I occupy his place. No man could stand here after what has passed without grave thoughts of the pathos of life and the irony of hope; but what Wordsworth calls "the trite reflections of morality," the inevitable bit of Burke as to "what shadows we are and what shadows we pursue," have already been delivered by a great man to a great assembly; and I will not repeat them.

Yet it will not be, I hope, unfitting that I, his friend, and who, if I may quote a phrase of my own, now occupy the place he once filled, should try to interest you by some few words about the man whom you honoured by electing as your President, and who (let me say) did you honour by accepting your election. I succeed him, and address you for the first time as your President. I will try to tell you something of the President you have lost.

When we know any one very well we are scarcely ever satisfied with the account or the estimate of him given

<sup>1</sup> An Address delivered to the Exeter Literary Society.

by another; and perhaps part of the charm of consummate biographies, such as Southey's Life of Nelson or Stanley's Life of Arnold, arises from the fact that we do not know, except through the artist's work, the subject of his labour. I can believe that those who knew Lord Nelson well might have something to say of Southey's imperfections. I did know Dr. Arnold, though but slightly; and Stanley's Life, though no one can recognise its remarkable ability more cordially than I, will not, I think, quite justly and completely convey to posterity the great man I remember. Each small contribution from this side and from that, a speech, an essay, an address, a letter, the recollection of a conversation, each, if a sincere utterance and intended to tell the truth, is valuable to a biographer or historian as a stone or a brick to be used in some part, prominent or obscure, of the edifice he is building. Some such humble contribution it may be possible to make to the story of the life of Sir Stafford Northcote which is certain to be written.

I knew him from a child, but my first intimate association with him was at school at Eton. And it is remarkable, on looking back to those days, how much he remained the same in his main characteristics, moral and intellectual, from the beginning of his life to the end. After a few, a very few,

light-hearted transgressions of discipline (for they were nothing more, and corrected, as Dr. Keate corrected everything, by the rod) he settled down to a course of steady but not excessive or unhealthy industry. In those days, I speak of the decade between 1830 and 1840, the curriculum of Eton was undoubtedly narrow and defective. But at least, what was taught was well worth teaching, and was taught excellently and thoroughly. The more perfect idea of a great educational seminary had not then taken shape. The masters taught us Latin and Greek, and did not teach us pulling and cricket. The Duke of Newcastle had recently founded and endowed a scholarship for the best scholar the school could annually produce ; and the masters had not founded prizes for running and leaping and walking, and other natural or unnatural athletics. The Newcastle Scholar, strange as it may sound to the present generation, was as much thought of in the school, as the Captain of the Boats or the Captain of the Eleven. The answer of a distinguished Devonshire nobleman to a public commission, that it would not be against a boy at Eton to be a Newcastle scholar if he was also a fair proficient in some athletic pursuit, could not then have been given with truth, as no doubt it was when the noble Earl gave it. It seemed in those days to be the idea that the river and the playing-fields presented sufficient attractions of themselves ; and that there was no need for the authorities to urge on the boys to games and amusements of which they were tolerably certain, without such encouragement, to be quite fond enough. Yet they pulled, they played cricket, they played hockey and fives and football, not perhaps with the fierce enthusiasm and profound science of the present time, yet well enough to do themselves a great deal of good in the way of manly self-reliance and healthy exercise. They could put a boat through the water at a good pace

against a swift stream : they could knock balls about in what seemed good style : they could beat Westminster (I speak as an Eton man) : they could hold their own against Winchester and Harrow.

Into this Eton of 1830 Sir Stafford Northcote entered as a boy, and soon became distinguished both as a scholar and as an adept in the games which scholars then pursued. He was a good oar, a good hockey-player, and a remarkably fast runner. In some other games his short sight stood in his way. Then, as always, he was conspicuous for the singular facility with which everything he did was done. A sound scholar, with a graceful and accurate command of such Greek and Latin as Eton boys were familiar with, he never seemed to be taking trouble or expending labour. Everything was done almost as a matter of course, and he seemed always to have leisure for games, for walks, for talks, for all those things which make life pleasant without making it useless. He had time for everything, and everything was well done. This reputation followed him to Oxford, where, with Arthur Hugh Clough for his fellow-scholar, he won a scholarship at Balliol, a prize as eagerly coveted in those days as in these, and subjecting the Scholar to a discipline in Lecture and out of Lecture which I believe no one who has undergone it but has felt to his great advantage in his whole after-life. There, too, he obtained a Classical first-class and some distinction in Mathematics, without any one being aware that he was reading hard, and with no apparent serious interference with the social and other pleasures of the place.

This was from no affected ostentation of a disregard for the distinctions of the University. Sir Stafford Northcote was not a man who made up for studied negligence in public by keeping himself awake on strong green tea, and reading half the night with a wet towel round his head. The simplicity of his nature would have recoiled from such silly and dangerous

vanity. But, then, as always, the quickness of his apprehension, the clearness and method of his mind, the ease and felicity with which he could reproduce what he had digested and assimilated, enabled him to attain success with an amount of labour which was the admiring despair of his friends and the wonder of those who saw him only as the delight of wine-parties for his humorous stories, his genial playfulness, his hearty enjoyment of the fun, the brightness, and the wisdom of others, which (so far as young men are capable of such things) made college-life a joy in the present, and a rich storehouse of good and happy thoughts in the past.

Such as he was when he left Oxford, such he remained in all the main outlines of his character till the very end of his life; and although, of course, lapse of years told upon him as on other men, ripening his judgment, strengthening his oratory, developing his intellect; still he remained at sixty-eight very much what he was at twenty-eight, except that he was an old man instead of a young. He was a character who exemplified in life the precept of Horace as to fiction :

" *Servetur ad imum  
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.*"

It follows from what I have already said that with the ordinary and greatest Greek and Latin writers he was familiar. Not that he was ever so learned a scholar as Mr. Gladstone or Lord Lyttelton, Mr. Lowe or, above all, Sir George Cornwall Lewis; but he knew his classics as Mr. Canning or Mr. Pitt or Sir Robert Peel knew them; and they formed the occasion of a pleasant controversy between the young Northcote and the aged Wellesley; in which, as was natural, the larger reading of the old Marquis was able to defend with success the classical authority of a Latin word which the young Oxford man had ventured to question.<sup>1</sup> I cannot speak of his

knowledge of German or Italian, but he had an unusually wide acquaintance with French literature; so wide and deep that I should suppose few living Englishmen excelled or even equalled him. His knowledge of English literature, both old and recent, was very great indeed; and if he did not always admire what I do, nor as I do, this is natural in such matters, and though, as every one else does, I think my taste right, he probably thought just the same of his taste, and very likely upon grounds just as good. Having said this, I may add, merely as my own opinion, that I do not think he appreciated fully works of high imagination, and that he hardly felt refinement of style, melody of language, subtlety of expression, as much as many men I have known far his inferiors in intellectual power and general cultivation. I should myself say that it was the same as to art. Perhaps he had not given time to it; perhaps he could not give the time; perhaps it did not seem to him worth the trouble and the study which a real and thorough comprehension of fine art, as of everything really great and profound, requires of a man who wishes fully to comprehend it. He knew much about it, in a general way he admired it; but, to say the very truth, he always seemed to me, as he was somewhat deaf to the highest strains in literature, so to be somewhat blind to the most exquisite and sublimest creations of the painter or sculptor. Remember, that in saying this I feel entirely that he would probably have said something in kindly disparagement of the taste of his critic, if he had lived and thought it worth while to criticise him.

Of his English style you have yourselves had examples and can judge as well as I; and we have to thank Lady

sea-shore alone, whereas Lord Wellesley had used it of a river-bank, for which kind of shore it was contended *ripa* was the proper expression. But Lord Wellesley me and silenced the contention by the authority of Horace and Virgil.

<sup>1</sup> The word was *littus*, which Sir Stafford Northcote maintained to be applicable to the

Iddesleigh for a volume of his papers, full of interest, excellent as pieces of literature, handling a variety of topics with that easy mastery difficult to attain, but delightful to those for whose benefit it is exercised: different altogether from the superficial cleverness of the sciolist, and suggesting always that the sources of it are unexhausted, and in every page of them, if I may quote a phrase of Lady Iddesleigh's own, "reflecting his clear judgment and his gentle, unprejudiced mind." The range of the volume is very wide; from Political Economy and the closing of the Exchequer by Charles the Second to Nothing.

"*Intervalla vides humani commoda.*"

Yet all the subjects receive fresh and apposite illustration from his large knowledge, his playful wit and fancy, his serene and impartial understanding; and the papers appear to me to hit the exact and happy medium between learned and exhaustive dissertations, which would have been entirely out of place, and those merely superficial addresses which wile away half an hour more or less agreeably, and then are, as they ought to be, forgotten.

Something akin to these papers were his speeches delivered in Parliament and elsewhere. In oratory, however, he greatly and distinctly improved as years went on. I remember many years ago, when Sir Stafford was a young man, his making a speech from this platform at a meeting presided over by the then Bishop of Exeter, a man of very great qualities, himself in a certain style an orator wellnigh unrivalled, and a critic of other men's performances at once most competent and most severe. His judgment of Sir Stafford's speech was not only very unfavourable, but committed him to the opinion that the speaker never could succeed in public life. How entirely the bishop's forecast was falsified by the event we all know. He became, as I can testify, a speaker perfectly competent to hold his own with the greatest masters of debate in

the House of Commons, one with whom the foremost man of his time always felt that he must deal respectfully, and put forth his whole strength to answer: not perhaps one who could thunder down a Chamber or sweep the House of Commons away in a fierce flood of eloquence; but one who could express clear thought in clear language, could conceive with spirit and express with dignity, and could leave his audience when he sat down not, perhaps, convinced (who ever convinced a political antagonist on the spot by a speech?), yet brought to a pause, if they were his opponents, and supplied, if they were his supporters, with excellent reasons for the vote they were about to give. Above all, he had in large measure that which Aristotle calls the *πίεσις ἡθική*, the moral suasion, the influence of character, charming and conciliating even where it did not convince. The great Lord Erskine, as I have heard his son say, was once discussing with Mr. Canning the merits and gifts of Mr. Perceval, whom Lord Erskine thought Mr. Canning underrated as a rival. Lord Erskine said that Mr. Perceval was a much abler man than Mr. Canning was disposed to admit, for various reasons, which he gave, and then he added: "Remember, Canning, that you never speak without making an enemy, Perceval never speaks without making a friend, and this in itself is a great power." I leave the application of the story to those who have heard Sir Stafford Northcote speak.

In this assembly I must pass over his politics *siccō pedē*. At one time we thoroughly agreed, but for many years his politics and mine very widely differed. Which of us changed most I really do not know; but of this I am sure, that in every change or modification of opinion he was actuated by the purest principle, and that in no single action of his life did he ever deviate for one instant from the path pointed out to him by unbending integrity and stainless honour. Two remarks, quasi-political in their character, will I permit myself.

First, that Free-trade opinions were almost congenital with him. In his allegiance to them he never wavered. Almost the last public service he rendered his country was to preside with remarkable prudence, fairness, and ability over the Commission on the Depression of Trade, of which one unquestioned and unquestionable result was to show that countries relying on Protection suffered much more heavily from the depression than those which rely upon Free-trade. He once indeed, under strong pressure, admitted Fair-trade to the rank of what he called "a pious opinion"; but every one knew that his own opinion on the subject was not pious, and that whatever he might allow as an opinion, his practice would be rigidly orthodox. Next, that wherever Sir Stafford Northcote was, into whatever office he was put, by whomsoever he was surrounded, his first impulse was to reform; to find out and correct abuses, to curtail useless expenditure, to promote practical efficiency. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say, that every society and every institution, with which he ever was connected, is the better for the connection. Many of the best and most approved reforms made in the last thirty years in our internal administration are due to the suggestion and to the guiding hand of Sir Stafford Northcote. To his reforms no one ever did or could object. It is only to be regretted that being of late years so much necessarily absorbed in the fierce strife of party politics, he had so little time or opportunity for displaying the genius, which he undoubtedly possessed, of a great practical reformer.

One other neutral observation I must be permitted to make; neutral always, thank God, as far as party politics are concerned, but one which it was at one time rather dangerous to make; dangerous I mean to one's personal comfort, if one made it in most social gatherings, whether in London or elsewhere. There was a time when, in the great American civil war, the

sympathies of the English upper classes went with Slavery, and when the North had scant justice and no mercy at their hands. I have myself seen that most distinguished man, Charles Francis Adams, subjected in society to treatment which, if he had resented it, might have seriously imperilled the relations of the two countries; and which nothing but the wonderful self-command of a very strong man, and his resolute determination to stifle all personal feeling, and to consider himself only as the minister of a great country, enabled him to treat, as he did, with mute disdain. But in this critical state of things in and out of Parliament, Mr. Disraeli and Sir Stafford Northcote on one side, and the Duke of Argyll and Sir George Cornwall Lewis on the other, mainly contributed to keep this country neutral, and to save us from the ruinous mistake of taking part with the South. On this matter Sir Stafford Northcote thought with his usual clearness, but spoke with an energy not usual in so kind a man. I well remember his saying to me in this city that he hoped to live long enough to see a particular member of Mr. Jefferson Davis's cabinet hanged for his treason; and he added that he could not understand how any man could look without utter horror and loathing (they were his own words, not mine) at the prospect of a great empire founded upon slavery and committed to the maintenance of slavery as the very principle of its being. His calmness was not coldness or indifference, his gentleness was not weakness. Moral wrong (as he regarded it), oppression, cruelty, roused him to wrath and indignation, the more striking from their contrast to his habitual serenity, the more impressive from the unexpected disclosure of those depths of feeling and emotion, the existence of which was generally concealed under the veil of his quiet self-control. I do not know, but I imagine that it was his strong sympathy with the Federal cause, and his sense of the reparation we owed to America, which led him to place his great abilities at the service

of his country as one of the commissioners of the Treaty of Washington, though the Treaty was negotiated by a Government to which he was politically opposed. And I can never forget the unbroken dignity with which he sustained remarks upon himself, and the spirit with which he repelled attacks upon the provisions of the Treaty, made, I must say, with complete impartiality from both sides of the House of Commons.

Of his powers as a financier it does not become me to speak. Finance is a subject which I most imperfectly understand ; and if you have no clear ideas yourself about a subject, you are pretty sure to waste the time of others and your own if you try to speak upon it. But I have heard from those who are competent to judge that he had great financial skill and power, and that where subsequent Chancellors of the Exchequer have departed from his plans, they have departed generally for the worse.

It follows, if I have placed before you even the faintest image of Sir Stafford Northcote, that he lacked one quality of the great Dr. Johnson : he was but a poor hater. I do believe, that either by original creation or in answer to his prayers, God had delivered him from envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. For this reason, though he led his party, as it seems to one not belonging to it, with singular skill and wisdom, he was not perhaps a very good party man. Ben Jonson says that in his day the times were "so wholly partial or malicious, that if a man be a friend all sits well about him, his very vices shall be virtues ; if an enemy or of the contrary faction, nothing is good or tolerable in him ; insomuch that we care not to discredit and shame our judgements to soothe our passions." Nothing in this vigorous passage found an echo in Sir Stafford's nature. He thought the best he could of every one : he declined to ascribe bad motives to those at whose hands he had experienced slights and injuries

which many men, which perhaps most men, would have bitterly resented. He felt these things keenly, but with a rare magnanimity he uttered no complaint, he held his peace. I believe that he forgave those who did them : he certainly made excuses for them, and that with no double sense of irony or sarcasm, but honestly, truly, simply. Well, they have their reward, and he has his !

For it follows also from what I have said, that if he was a poor hater he was a fast friend. He was indeed and in truth,

" That faithful friend, best boon of Heaven,  
Unto some favoured mortal given,  
Though still the same, yet varying still  
Our each successive want to fill ;  
Beneath life's ever fitful hue  
To us he bears an aspect new."

So says the author of *The Cathedral* ; and those who had the friendship of Sir Stafford Northcote might well thank Heaven for the boon it had bestowed. His friendship once given was never capriciously, was, I may say by *him*, never withdrawn. It outlasted diversities of life, changes of opinion, differences of politics, severance of circumstances. He clung to friends always, in success, in sorrow, nay more, in discredit : he worked actively for friends without regard to politics, till the ties of party became too strong for him to break. In this place I would not if I could, and I could not if I would, say all he was to one who had known him from a child. The lofty eulogy of Virgil,

" Eripheus, justissimus unus  
Qui fuit in Teucris et servantissimus aequi,"

was once quoted by Mr. Gladstone of Sir George Cornewall Lewis, and might form the foundation of an eulogy as lofty and as true upon Sir Stafford Northcote ; but I take refuge in the noble lines written by Mr. Lyttelton in 1749, describing *his* friend :

" He loved his friends with such a warmth of  
heart,  
So clear of interest, so devoid of art,

Such generous friendship, such unshaken  
zeal,  
No words can speak it, but our tears can  
tell.  
Oh, candid truth! oh, faith without a  
stain!  
Oh, manners gently firm, and nobly  
plain!"

There is much more I should like to say; as to his services to this county,—which he loved so well, that he once said to me, that of course Devonshire was less beautiful in winter than in summer, but that Devonshire in winter was more beautiful than any other county in summer,—to this neighbourhood, to this city, to this Society. But as to this last matter you know what he was and the value of his services to you as your President; while I can feel at any rate the burden you have imposed on me in electing me as his successor. Time, however, and your patience are alike exhausted. I will end therefore what I have to say with no attempt to sum it up. I have tried to put before you, as I saw him, a person who, taken altogether, was a very definite, a very remarkable, I had almost said an unique, character. Holder of an ancient baronetey, of good but not large estate, with no particular advantages of connection, with a reputation from school and college high indeed but not extraordinary, he ended by filling some of the greatest offices in the country. He was Secretary of State, Chancellor of the Exchequer, First Lord of the Treasury, Leader of the House of Commons, and when out of office Leader of his party in that House, and lastly an English earl. He has had his bust, his statue, his picture, in his life and after his death, painted and set up by subscriptions, to which men of all classes, of all shades of opinion, religious and political, have most heartily contributed. A rare example of the force of a good and high character. But if, like Agricola, he was happy in the clear light of his life, he

was, like him, happy also in the opportunity of his death. It is not for me to settle the account between Sir Stafford Northcote, his colleagues, and his party; but when one thinks of how he died and what hastened, if it did not cause, his death, two thoughts, one bitter and one consoling, are forced upon the mind. It was said some years ago by a great cynic, with too much truth, that gratitude is a factor of very small importance in English politics. It must also be said that the life of Sir Stafford Northcote demonstrates that English politics do not lower the character or corrupt the heart; and that the Leader of the House of Commons may be a man of simple life and true piety, a steadfast friend, a generous foe, a sincere believer, and a good man.

One closing word and I have done. I have spoken of him throughout as Sir Stafford Northcote, and I have done so on purpose. When Sir Robert Peel offered Robert Southey a baronetey, he asked him "to adorn the distinction of the baronetey by consenting to accept the title." In like manner Sir Stafford Northcote might well say, with Lord Thurlow, that the peerage solicited him, not he the peerage. He conferred, not received, honour by changing his old name to a new one. "*Ita fit*," says the well-known passage of Boethius, in the *De Consolacione Philosophiae*, "*ut non virtutibus ex dignitate, sed ex virtute dignitatibus honor accedat.*" Great qualities gain nothing from dignities, but dignities increase in honour by the great qualities of those who accept them. In almost the last letter I ever received from him he signed himself, "Ever yours affectionately, S. H. N., *sive tu mavis* IDDESLEIGH." I do not prefer it. I therefore use the freedom permitted me by my friend, and end this poor tribute to his memory with the name of Stafford Northcote.

COLERIDGE.

## PICTURES AT SEA.

ONCE in the Bay of Bengal I witnessed from the deck of a ship named the Hougoumont, a sight the like of which, had I read a description of it, I should have believed impossible in Nature. The weather had been gloomy and sullen throughout the day : the swell was a jumble of sombre green folds sulkily shouldering one another as they ran, and I noticed that they likewise moved very sluggishly as oil might, or water thick with ooze. A light air slipped from one swinging brow to another, but it had not weight enough to steady the canvas, and the ship rolled dismally, burying her sides with a regular sea-sawing of the channels lifted foaming ; whilst the blows of the sails against the masts sent blasts of noise like the explosions of nine pounders vibrating through the dusky air.

The look of the sky was more menacing than the warnings of the glass, low as the mercury stood. That a hurricane was not far off was not to be doubted ; but we believed ourselves to be on the southern verge of it, and that we should therefore escape the central rage, though it was more than probable that we should encounter the lighter tempest flying off the black wing of the storm-fiend as he passed. At five o'clock in the afternoon, though the sun then stood many degrees above the horizon, it was so dark that the men had to feel about for the ropes. The ship having been stripped of her canvas, the noises aloft were small and weak ; whilst the straining sounds from bulkheads and strong fastenings in the cabins and hold were so muffled by battened hatches and tarpaulined skylights that they scarcely caught the ear. The dismaying influence of the dark still shadow on high showed

strongly in the glimmering faces of the men. I was but a lad at the time, making my second voyage, and so was comparatively unseasoned ; and I was awed and alarmed by this sullen gloom, whose preternatural complexion made you think of having floated into some sunless world of waters over which no star ever sparkled, no moon ever rose, and whose atmosphere was to blacken yet as the deeper solitudes were penetrated. One yearned for a flash of lightning, for the growl of distant thunder, for any quality of the familiar to neutralise the superstitious fears inspired by this afternoon darkness, imperturbably tinturing its substance into the raven hue of midnight. We spoke in whispers. The mate receiving his orders from the captain, who delivered them in a low voice, would approach the men close before repeating them, as though he durst not break the stillness by bawling. There was an inconsolable sobbing of water alongside ; and at long intervals, audible only at moments when the breathless hang of the ship upon the slope of some liquid brow left the fabric death-like, you heard a sort of moaning noise in the air, vague and indeterminable, echoes no doubt from the field of battle that was yet leagues distant.

At eight o'clock it was pitch dark. The atmosphere was now breathless. Though I had been on deck since six, I had not witnessed once in any quarter of the horizon the faintest glare of lightning. A dim and rusty tinge of red had filtered into the west when the sun set, but the ugly illumination faded quickly. I went below to turn in, but finding that others of the watch I belonged to remained on deck I came back, and leaning over the

poop-rail, stood straining my eyes against the amazing blindness of the night, in vain search of any break of radiance upon the sea-line. The confused swell rolled to the ship in a huddle of liquid blocks of blackness, amid which large rich clouds of phosphor flashed with the mild play of sheet lightning. On a sudden, a young midshipman who was standing near bade me in a soft voice look right astern. The ship's head lay about west-south-west, and over the taffrail in the ebon void there I witnessed a very delicate hectic, a kind of pinkish tinge, sifting through the blackness. It resembled the slow floating upwards of a prodigious body of red smoke, or of smoke coloured with the flames of a continent on fire immeasurably distant. Its space on the horizon when first viewed might be measured by the breadth of our taffrail; but in a short time it had rolled along past either quarter till it occupied the whole of the sea-line astern, meanwhile continually ascending as though formed of a substance apart from the clouds; and it grew clearer and brighter as its surface enlarged, and presently the whole of the eastern and southern sky was aglow with it. There is no colour or combination of colours that I am acquainted with by which I should be able to define the astonishing complexion of this light. I must speak of it as pink, though a painter would not thus express it. Its westernmost verge did not extend beyond our mastheads; nevertheless the radiance cast a phantasmal illumination upon the black sky down to the confines of the ocean, and the sinuous sea-line was plain the whole horizon round, as though limned with a trembling sweep of a brush dipped in Indian ink.

In my brief eight years of seafaring life I have seen the ships I was in coloured by some strange, many lovely, and a few terrifying lights; but the like of this midnight lustre, crimsoning the sooty heavens without revealing a

single break amid the compacted masses of vapour under which it rolled I had never beheld before, I have never beheld since, and to be plain — comprehending its cyclonic significance—I never wish to behold again. The mysterious magical light was upon the sails, upon the decks, upon the faces and forms of the crew; but the sea lay black as thunder under it. Everything was shadowless in it: nothing cast an image. I extended my arm over the white top of a hencoop, but the limb threw no shadow. The radiance was circumambient, encompassing as mist is, but clear as glass. Looking upwards I could see the vane at the royal-masthead standing like a black steak in the mystic sheen; and to the very flying jibboom end the ship floated as plain to the gaze as ever she could have been submitted by the full moon riding high.

What was the hidden luminary that shed this light? Whence arose this effulgent midnight mist? The illumination might have passed for the setting of the sun, going down on the wrong side of the world. It was an atmospheric effect, beautiful, thrilling, marvellous, and terrifying too. Many, I doubt not, have witnessed the same spectacle under the heights in which that pale strange shining happened. It was enough to make all hands of us suppose that a tempest of cyclonic force would burst upon us soon; and when in about half an hour the lustre, after waning into a tarnished orange, died out into impenetrable blackness, we stood by ready for what we made sure was to follow. It blew indeed, though not with hurricane power. There was so much lightning for fifteen or twenty minutes that the sky seemed filled with yellow and violet darts writhing their burning lengths like serpents as they vanished in the sea that flashed back whole sheets of fire to the lancing of the levin brands. The weather then grew commonplace enough: plenty of wet, a high foaming sea: the ship

hove to under storm-trysail plunging and labouring with screaming rigging : an ashen dawn with sulphur-coloured scud blowing up from the horizon like smoke from the chimneys of a city of factories ; and then at noon a fine day, a roasting sun overhead, and the vessel, under fast-drying canvas, lazily stemming the high swell left by the gale.

So much for one atmospheric effect of a tropical storm. One turns willingly to the gentle oceanic picture. As on shore, so at sea : it is out of moonlight that you obtain the daintiest and most fairy-like effects. What is there tenderer in all nature than the spectacle of moon-rise on the ocean, when the orb, standing hidden a minute or two behind some delicate line of vapour, whose extremities her beams colour to the aspect of lunar rainbows, sheds a silver streak of icy light upon the black line of the sea-board, until it looks like liquid ivory in the act of arching over in a gush of brilliant whiteness, as froth from the head of a breaker ? I think one misses the best of the moonlight effects when on board a steamer. There is little or nothing in the fabric, for ever storming along, for the crystal beam to beautify. The structure, vibrating to the thunder of her engines, rushes onwards too swiftly for glorification by those cold rays. It is from the deck of the sailing-ship that you command in perfection the wonders and splendours of the oceanic amphitheatre. Then you witness in such wise, that your heart receives into it, the whole spirit of the scenic grandeurs of that mighty stage : the glowing galleries of the west : the burning pavilions into which the sun retires : the cloud-pinion smitten into a mild glory by Venus blazing jewel-like in a sphere of light, in which the adjacent stars are hidden as by moonshine : the gathering of the storm-cloud of a glassy and livid brow, with the restless lifting of the waters to its purple shadow : the flight of the falling body of fire bursting into a storm of sparks

as it seems to strike the dark and distant sea-line over which a few stars are peeping like eyes of gigantic shapes, whose shadowy forms the imagination will not find it hard to distinguish.

A sailing-ship moving quietly onwards, or lying restfully in the heart of a calm, offers a surface upon which the magic brushes of the moon will paint a hundred lovely things. The clear, sharp shadows resemble jet inlaid upon the ivory of the planks. The spaces of splendour upon the yards between the black dyes, wrought by the interception of the reflection of the end of a boom or the clew of a sail, are like bands of shining silver. There is nothing fairer than the spectacle of a sleeping ship with her canvas hanging silent from the yards, stealing out to the light of the moon that soars sparkling as if wet from the sea. The white glory gushes veil-like to the trucks high aloft in the clear obscure, and sinks wanly from sail to sail until the fabric, that a little while before was but a deeper shade upon the evening dusk, gleams out into an inexpressible loveliness of phantom form and airy substance. Stars, bright as Coleridge's tiny sun amid the branches, sparkle in brass and glass ; and along the rails there is a diamond twinkling of dew, and the sheen upon the canvas seems to overflow the bolt-ropes and frame the irradiated spaces with a slender atmosphere of light delicate as mist. To the small swaying of the vessel the moonshine on her decks flows like running rivulets of quicksilver : the shadows alternate with the brightness, and the reflected filigree of the rigging crawling to the swing of the structure makes one think of the thin boughs of a leafless tree stirred by the wind against some snow-clad rise.

One moonlight effect I recall with delight. It was a dark, tropical evening : there was a light air blowing, of sufficient weight to keep the sails asleep, and a long troubled swell was heaving from the north. The stars

shone very clearly, but the night lay dark upon the ocean, and you only knew where the sea-line was by observing where the luminaries ceased to shine. On a sudden a pale greenish hue in the east announced the rising of the moon. The rugged horizon ran in ink against that lunar dawn, and as the orb lifted her brilliant disk clear of the ebon welter the outline of a sailing-ship showed to the right of her. Soon she had climbed right over the vessel : her glorious wake ran fan-like in a turbulent surface of silver far along the heaving waters ; and in the middle of this radiant river sailed the ship, the wind right astern of her, her yards square, studding sails out on both sides—but all of the deepest dye of blackness. There is nothing in language to convey this picture—to express this vision, rather. I see it now—the stately rolling of the dark pyramids of cloths, an occasional flash of white fire from her side or decks, and the mild glory over her stern showing in arches of silver under the curves of her sails. As she passed out of the moon's reflection she grew pale, mist-like, elusive. It is indeed the atmospheric effects of the sea which make it so rich in symbolism. The deep is eternity materialised, so to speak. I always regard the ocean as a form of infinity rendered compassable to human intelligence by an apparition of confines which yet do not bound it. It is certain that we find in it our most pregnant imagery of life and death. The picture of the ship I have just written about abounded in human significance, the full force of which you would have understood had you watched the stately, spacious-winged fabric drawing out from the throbbing and palpitating river of silver moonlight, passing in spectral pallor, and vanishing among the folds of the liquid dusk astern. It was something to accept as an illustration of that form of unreality which the poet indicates in speaking of life as a dream between a sleep

and a sleep. But enough of such moralizing.

A fine effect is often produced by a conflict of moonlight and lightning. I witnessed a magnificent scene of this kind in the Indian Ocean, the island of Amsterdam in sight on the starboard quarter. There was a full moon in the north, and in the south hung a vast bank of clouds charged with fire and thunder. The early gusts of this electric storm broke away great wings of vapour from the shoulder of the main body, and sent them speeding athwart the moon. The shining of the luminary was ghastly, rendered so by the alternations of her own light, darting wildly over the edge of the driven clouds, with the quick dazzle of the southern flashes. Her beams seemed to be coloured by the electric leapings. It was the eye, of course, that carried the reflection of the blue and sun-bright darts to the northern illumination ; but the effect was as though the lightning struck its own hellish quality into the fabric of the silver beams as they fell from the rims of the flying clouds. The combined illumination put a new and monstrous face upon the ocean. It made you think of a dead sea complexioned to a very mockery of vitality by the light of such flames as those from which Milton's Fiend rose to steer his flight to dry land.

The effects of lightning upon the ocean are full of dramatic surprises. Moonlight is all sweetness and softness and blandness ; but the revelations of the electric dart are startling, with something of a tragic nature in them. I was once becalmed in highly phosphorescent waters, but the surface was so still that the few gleams visible in the dark profound were faint as the reflection of a star riding upon the heave of the hidden swell. A cloud gathered overhead, and its sooty belly seemed to lean for support upon our scarcely swaying trucks. Suddenly it rained. One should spend some months in Jamaica to understand the

meaning of such a "shower" as this. In a few moments our decks were half full of water, the scuppers sobbing madly: the roaring of the rain and hail smiting the ocean drowned all other sounds. The sea was so phosphorescent that a piece of wood, dropped overboard, chipped out fire as though it had burst into flames. Judge then of the effect of that Niagara-fall of rain and hail! The ocean was flashed up into a plain of fire. It swept sparkling in one vast incandescent sheet to its limits, dimming into sickly sulphur as it approached the horizon. You might suppose that such an illumination as this would have revealed anything afloat upon it; but though I took a long look round, being deeply impressed by this sudden, wonderful burning of the ocean, I saw nothing, till all at once the darkness was split by a flash of lightning that leapt from the clouds away over our fore-yard-arm and shot into the water, as it seemed to me, a league distant on our starboard quarter, and then to this mighty flare there sprang out upon the view a large ship, well within a mile of us, snugged down to her topsails. The sight made me catch my breath for an instant, for the wonder of it lay in her having been invisible until the lightning threw her up, so bright was the water with the lashing of the rain. One waited for a second flash to make sure; and I dare say had she foundered before it came, there would not have been wanting people amongst us to swear that they had seen the Phantom Ship.

Indeed it is quite possible that this grand old legend had its origin in some atmospheric effect due to lightning, moonshine, or fog. I have sometimes at sea, but more often in our narrow waters, watched a ship for a few moments, removed my gaze, and thinking of her presently, looked for her again and found her gone. This is one of those mysterious disappearances with which all seamen are acquainted.

The evanishment however grows more perplexing when, after searching for the vessel and believing her to be gone for good, you look for her again later on and find her almost in the same place. A thing of this kind would have been accepted by the early mariner as a miracle. He would have come home with a yarn about it as long as his arm; and so have fired the first poetically-minded wedding guest he could constrain with his eye with visions and fancies of a spectral ship. Be this as it will, disappearances and reappearances of this kind can be due to nothing but the subtle and imperceptible gathering of haze about the object. Mist will often take its complexion from the atmosphere. I have seen a bank of haze of so sky-like an azure that but for the curvature of the sea-line under it caused by the deflective sweep of its base, I should have accepted it as pure blue air. White mists also, of a slightly opaline tincture corresponding to perfection with the hue of the heavens beyond, I have detected only by the apparent depression of the horizon under them. A ship may be in the act of piercing one of these elusive veils with her flying jibboom when you first catch sight of her. She is as plain in your sight as your own vessel; yet when you seek her a minute after she has vanished, and there is nothing in the sombre or sunny texture of the stuff she has entered to persuade you that what you are viewing is not the same brown or cerulean sky that stands over and on either hand of it.

To the mariner the fog is about the most obnoxious of all the conditions of his vocation. He is not likely to understand me then when I speak of its beauties; yet I must assure him, nevertheless, that many lovely atmospheric and other effects are produced on the waters by those luminous, enfolding bodies of vapour, the silence of whose white caverns is violated in these scientific times by the horrible braying of the steam-horn and the

terrified fluttering of the engine-room bell. The kind of fog I have in my mind is the snow-like body of vapour sometimes not very much taller than the Folkestone cliffs, sometimes so low-lying indeed that you may see the lofty spars of a big ship forking out of it into the blue air and bright sunshine, when the rest of the structure is as absolutely hidden as an object rolled up in wool. As a rule very little wind accompanies these appearances. The mass of delicate, smoke-like, sparkling particles slides along softly, and it is therefore slow and tender in its revelations, submitting nothing which the manner of its discovery does not render beautiful. A man standing on the deck of a ship in the heart of a soft and gleaming thickness may not be able to see the mainmast from the distance of the wheel. The silence is peculiar, there is a certain quality of oppressiveness in it ; nor is this wholly fanciful for though there be a deep hush on the sea, yet, when you emerge into clear air, the difference between the stillness you have quitted and that which you have entered is instantly perceptible. Presently there is a little flaw, a chasm opens in the luminous body of whiteness : the space of water that glances like steel around the ship enlarges its narrow horizon : there is a general brightening of light, though all the forward part of the ship is still hidden in the smother, and the only mast you can see looks as if it were sawed off a few feet above the deck. If the coast be nigh or ships be at hand, there will happen now a slow stealing out of objects, and the sight is one which I think every man who has seen it will recall with admiration. Off Dover a ship I was aboard of sailed into such a fog as I am describing, and lay without motion for some hours in the midst of it. Any trickle of tide there may have been kept company with the vapour. There was no air, and the water came out of the thickness to the bends with the polish and gleam of oil. There was

nothing to break the quiet but the distant faint thunder of the wash of surf, or sometimes the remote tinkling of a ship's bell, or the rattle of a little winch in some nearer craft trembling upon the ear like the sound of musketry. Presently there was a movement of wind, and, as the soft fingers of the draught of air tenderly drew aside the curtains of the mist, the pictures offered were a series of beautiful surprises. All about us stood the white fog upon the sea in elbows and points, in seams, ravines and defiles, like to the scarred and precipitous front of chalk cliffs ; and now there would ooze out a little smack, whose shadow within the vapour held you speculating till the sunshine smote it into the proportions and colour of some cutter or lugger-rigged craft, with reddish mainsail gently swaying and a sou'-wester or two over the rail ; and now, as the snow-like thickness was rent afresh, some stout brig with black or chequered sides, and a blue vein of smoke going up straight out of her galley-chimney and then arching over like the curl of a plume, would be unveiled ; and no matter how ugly the craft was that would be thus suddenly confessed, the witchery of the shining background of cloud entered her and submitted her as dainty and delightful, full of a grace that owed nothing to form ; so that even a wretched little coaster, with boom, fore-sail and a suit of canvas as many-coloured as Joseph's coat, met the eye clothed with beauty from the buttons of her trucks down to the tremulous silver of the reflection of her sails under her. Then presently glimpses of the land were to be had, the flash of sunward-staring windows ashore, the vivid green of verdure sloping to the edge of the white abrupt, a steamer with raking funnels cautiously coming out, the twinkle of foam upon the margin of grayish shingle.

But you need a mountainous country to obtain the highest and choicest effects of these fog-pictures. The noblest show in this way that I ever beheld was off

Mossel Bay on the South African coast. There the inland mountains tower to an elevation that, though they may be ten or fifteen miles distant, seems to enable them to cast the twilight of their Andean shadows upon the ship. It is like beholding the birth of a world to mark those Titanic peaks growing out of the white envelopment, as though creation were busy in yonder void and shaping a vast territory out of sheer chaotic blindness.

Another lovely effect I have often gazed at with delight,—the vision of a ship hovering on the horizon with an atmosphere of shivering brightness between her and the sea-line. Then with the eye or with the telescope she looks to be floating in the blue air. I have seen an airy space of pearl hanging like a cloud over the sea boundary, and I have watched it lifting and lengthening, one shining outline rising to another out of the ocean, until three stately pyramids of canvas have been hove up: then presently the hull rose to complete the symmetrical fabric, and thus, apparently afloat in the azure, the ship has sailed towards us without appearing to touch the sea, until the line of the horizon behind her was level with her counter. Refraction, or some like quality productive of atmospheric effects, will yield many queer and even startling ocean-pictures. The mate of a vessel once called my attention to a ship about four miles distant right abeam. There was a light wind, and the day was wonderfully fine and clear. The stranger was under all plain sail and her yards braced fore and aft, which enabled us to obtain a good view of her canvas. She was so incredibly distorted by the atmosphere as to be unrecognizable as a ship, in the sense I mean of that term. Her masts were curved like the prongs of a pitchfork: her hull rounded like the back of a hog: her sails ludicrously elongated: her jibbooms twisted into a figure beyond description. I have no doubt we presented the same convulsed

appearance to her. Every man who saw her broke into a loud laugh; yet she was an object to put some queer ideas into the imaginative brain, and I have little doubt that the paternity of many a singular superstition of the sea might be traced to such atmospheric caprices as this.

The effect of a red sunset upon a ship sailing quietly along is a study full of sweetness. The rigging shines like wires of brass, the sails like cloth of gold: there are crimson stars wherever there are windows. Against the soft evening blue she glides glorious as a fabric richly gilt. Sometimes the slow withdrawal of the western splendour from her may be watched; then her hull will be dark with evening shadow, whilst the light, like a golden veil lifted off her by an invisible hand, slides upwards from one rounded stretch of canvas to another, till, burning for a breath like a streak of fire in the dog-vane at the lofty masthead, it vanishes, and the structure floats gray as the ash of tobacco. In this withdrawal of the sun and in the gathering of the shadows of night at sea there is a certain melancholy; but I do not think it can be compared with the spirit of desolation you find in the breaking of the dawn over the ocean. The passage from sunlight to darkness even in the tropics is not so swift but that the mind so to speak has time to accept the change; but there is something in the cold, spiritless gray of dawn that always did and still does affect my spirits at sea. The froth of the running billows steals out ghastly to the faint, cheerless, and forbidding light. Chilly as the night may have been, a new edge of cold seems to have come into the air with the sifting of the melancholy spectral tinge of gray into the east. The light puts a hollow look into the face of the seaman. The aspect of his ship is full of bleakness: the stars are gone, the skies are cold, and the voices of the wind aloft are like a frosty whistling through clenched teeth. A mere fancy of

course which is instantly dissolved by the first level, sparkling beam of the rising sun ; but then it is fancy that makes up the life of the sea, for without it what is the vocation but a dull routine of setting and furling sail, of masticating hard beef and pork, of slushing masts, washing decks, and polishing the brassworks ! The spacious liquid arena is prodigal of inspiration and of delight to any one who shall carry imagination away with him on a voyage. There may be twenty different things to look at at once, and every one richer, sweeter, and more ennobling than the greatest of human poems to the heart that knows how to watch and receive. The shadow of a dark cloud over a ship, with the sunshine streaming white in

the clear blue foaming seas around : the vision of the iceberg at night, colouring the black atmosphere with a radiance of its own : the tropical blue of the horizon, lifting into brassy brightness to the central dazzle of the sun : the airy dyes of the evening over a ship in the far loneliness of the mid-ocean—scores of such sights there are, but what magic is there in human pen to express them ? The majesty of the Creator is nowhere so apparent : the Spirit of the Universe is nowhere else so present. Those who know most dare least in their desire to reproduce. What other response is there for the heart to make to the full recognition of the eye but the silence of adoration !

W. CLARK RUSSELL.

## FORESTRY.

THE report of the Committee of the House of Commons appointed to consider "Whether, by the establishment of a forest school or otherwise, our woodlands could be rendered more remunerative," has recently been published. And it may be worth while briefly to glance at the condition of forestry in Great Britain at the present time, which has already occupied the attention of three successive Parliamentary Committees, the result of their joint investigations being embodied in the aforesaid report.

I have no intention of inflicting upon my readers any repetition of the recommendations made by the Committee, which are still under consideration, and will no doubt receive careful attention; still less have I any intention of treating the subject from a scientific standpoint—for we are told that scientific forestry in this country is conspicuous only by its absence. But I venture to hope that the subject may not be uninteresting to the ordinary reader; while to all who are interested in land, and therefore in any possible means of making it more remunerative and more useful than it unhappily is at present, its treatment should need no apology.

The Crown forests of Great Britain were originally, as we all know, planted for a specific purpose,—for affording a supply of timber for the construction and maintenance of the Royal Navy. In the year 1812 it was estimated that no less than sixty thousand loads<sup>1</sup> of timber were required annually to maintain the Navy at its then existing strength of from seven to eight hundred thousand tons. Now, it was assumed that not more than

<sup>1</sup> A load of square timber = fifty cubic feet, a load of rough timber = forty cubic feet.

forty oak trees could stand on an acre of ground, so as to permit their growth to a full size, or to contain each one and a half loads of timber. Fifty acres therefore, were required to produce two thousand tons—the quantity necessary to build a seventy-four-gun ship, and one thousand acres for twenty such ships. And as the oak takes one hundred years to arrive at maturity, the extent of the Crown forests was assumed to be not less than one hundred thousand acres.

Steel and iron have now taken the place of wood in ship-building; and even where wood is used, the teak of Malabar is considered more valuable, especially where iron-plating is required, than English oak. In this respect, therefore, the necessity for scientific forestry has passed away, and sadly does the present condition of the Crown forests prove that such is the case.

Neither is Great Britain dependent, as many other countries are, upon growing forests as a protection for her towns and villages, or upon firewood as her only fuel. Her ships provide her with almost illimitable supplies of sea-borne timber for building and mining purposes; and so long as what is humorously called Free Trade exists, these supplies are not likely to fail. We have, it is true, suffered in the past summer from alternate droughts and floods, much of which might have been prevented by the judicious planting of trees and underwood, more especially on the banks of our rivers; but these have not been sufficiently severe, and their effects have not been sufficiently lasting, as in the southern countries of Europe, to emphasise the necessity or advisability of a study of forestry. In our moist climate, the necessity for

the storage and the careful distribution of water is not so pressing as on the plains of India or Australia. Avalanches do not threaten the destruction of our houses because no forest barrier exists to protect them. Our industries are carried on and our homes are warmed by the consumption of coal. And to many, perhaps to most of our readers, any interest that forestry may possess is relegated to the attention of landed proprietors or their agents, who desire to beautify their landscapes or to afford coverts for their game.

And yet some of the statements, which are supported by corroborative evidence in the Report, are sufficiently startling to engage the attention of all who are interested in the true welfare of the nation. Some of these come to us in the shape of reproaches upon our national wisdom and our national intelligence. It is a reproach—lightly borne it is true, but none the less a reproach—that we are dependent upon foreign teaching for scientific instruction in forestry. And it is a reproach that whereas the area of woodland in the British Islands is sufficiently large, if properly managed, to supply in great measure the requirements of the country, there is an enormous, an unnecessarily enormous importation from abroad.<sup>1</sup>

To the former of these reproaches special point has been given by the fact that the colony of the Cape has been obliged to accept the services and to follow the advice of a French official in the management of their forests. And a similar expedient was found necessary, when the British Government took over the island of Cyprus, the principal wealth of which depends upon the maintenance, or more strictly the reconstruction, of her forests. In both these instances, an Englishman would no doubt have been preferred if

one could have been found competent to undertake the duties. But it implies no reflection on the personal ability of these French gentlemen, who were kind enough to come to our aid in these two instances, to say that indirectly their presence was felt to be a reproach, for the services of M. de Vasselot di Régné, the present Inspector-General of Forests at the Cape, who had already distinguished himself in France by the re-afforesting of the *dunes* of La Conbra, and of M. Moudon, his worthy compatriot, who responded to the call of the Government of Cyprus, could not, in themselves, fail to be of value to any country.

The success achieved in India by the comparatively small establishment of forest-officials, the greater number of whom, moreover, came to their work with no special or scientific training to guide them, has done much to remove this reproach, or, at any rate, to cause it to be regarded with more or less complacency. For not only have these officials, stimulated by the zeal and guided by the science of their late Inspector-General, brought up the tone of forest-administration in our eastern empire to the level of the most happily directed states of western civilisation, but they have from time to time assisted by their advice the Governments of our colonies whose forests they have visited on tours of official inspection. I am sorely tempted to linger on this part of my subject—to set before my readers how, on the one hand, by restraining the destruction of the forests by the wood-merchants, who felled for the sake only of personal aggrandisement; and how, on the other, by guiding, without checking, the cutting of trees by the peasants for their agricultural and building necessities, an arduous course was steered between the necessity for restraining reckless waste, and the obligation for meeting legitimate demand; and how a revenue, which in the year 1886-87 is placed at a surplus of forty-one million seventeen thou-

<sup>1</sup> The amount of woodland in the United Kingdom now stands at two million seven hundred and eighty-eight thousand acres, on the authority of the evidence given before the Parliamentary Committee.

sand rupees,<sup>1</sup> was built up from not only an entire absence of income, but from a rapidly diminishing capital. But I am reminded that the attention of the Committee was more immediately directed to our home forests, and the necessity that there was for removing the second reproach to which I have alluded—namely, the inefficient management of our British woodlands.

The value of timber annually imported into Great Britain was stated to be sixteen millions sterling,<sup>2</sup> and the largeness of this amount was considered to be an evidence that practical forestry was neither understood nor practised in Great Britain. I am not disposed to accept this reproach as applying generally to the whole of Great Britain. In England, it is true, forestry has until quite recently been considered a branch, and not a very important branch, of land-agency. But on the less generous and the less productive lands of Scotland, a race of men have been trained to manage the forests of an estate, from which a great proportion of the annual revenue is derived, if not in a scientific, yet in a productive manner. In the year 1881 a deputation of three professional foresters visited the principal woods of Scotland—Scone, Blair Athole, Beauly, Strathspey, Darnaway, &c.—and they have thus reported on what they there observed.

"These last" (the Scottish foresters) "have not made technical studies on the Continent.

<sup>1</sup> I shall not attempt to place this in English money. When the rupee was two shillings, a lakh of rupees equalled ten thousand pounds. Now the unhappy coin is gradually approaching half its former value.

<sup>2</sup> The total product of the State forests of France is given in the Statistical Almanac for the year 1881 at two million four hundred thousand cubic metres of rough timber. Of this six hundred thousand cubic metres were composed of oak, valued at forty francs, and the remainder of various deciduous trees and pines, valued all round at twenty francs. The total result thus amounted to sixty millions of francs, say one and a half millions sterling of our money, less than one-tenth of our imports.

The obligation to keep before them, in the domains which they administer, the raising of cattle, the preservation of game, the embellishment of the landscape, would, in any case, prevent them from applying strictly the rules of sylviculture. But they possess the two master qualities of the forester—practical sense and local experience. And it is thus apparent as we go through the beautiful woods which are confided to their care, that they do not compromise the future by inconsiderate operations."

This, however, is true as yet only of Scotland; and there, only on account of the low agricultural value of the soil. Generally speaking the Committee were amply justified in their conclusion, that "so far as Great Britain and Ireland are concerned, the management of our woodlands might be materially improved."

Without touching more particularly upon the recommendations made by the Committee, the value of which must stand upon their merits, it is necessary in order to arrive at a true appreciation of the value of the inquiry to glance at the general lines, as shown in the following questions, on which it was conducted.

1. How far there is need of some means of giving instruction to those engaged in the cultivation of woodlands?

2. How far the establishment of a school or schools of forestry would meet such need?

3. Whether a board of persons, representing various interests and associations connected with agriculture, arboriculture, and sylviculture, should be formed, with the assistance of Parliament, for the purpose of examining, granting certificates, and generally promoting the improvement of our woodlands?

4. Whether by either, or both, of such means, the cultivation of woodlands could be made more remunerative?

It will thus be seen that the question is, in its issues, almost entirely a matter for landed proprietors, for in England ninety per cent., and in Scotland the

whole, of the forests of the country are in the hands of private individuals. And these are compelled, by the pressure of financial circumstances, to spend what money they may have to spend on undertakings giving speedy returns, and not upon an enterprise, the commercial value of which seems to them to lie rather in the building up of capital for posterity, than in the immediate realisation of a revenue for themselves. If only to show that this revenue is neither so uncertain nor so remote as some people seem to think, I will take my readers, if they will permit me, to the example of what has lately been done in the way of forestry in Switzerland.

In that country some twenty-five years ago, attention was drawn to the enormous importation of wood, and to the low yield or capacity of the native forests. Reports were called for, and in the year 1863 the consumption of wood was officially stated to exceed the production by twelve million, eighty-nine thousand, two hundred cubic feet, the importation exceeding the exportation by fourteen million, eight hundred and twenty-three thousand cubic feet. The outcome of such neglect was stated to be certain ruin, if it was permitted to continue; and the result was the reorganisation of the Forest Department. But this work was for the Swiss Government comparatively an easy one, for of the nineteen per cent. of the whole area of the country which is under wood, three-fourths belong either directly to the State, or to the Communes, who are under the control of the State. And with regard to rights of private property also, communal governments have a habit of dealing in a summary way which would not be tolerated in England.

In such an exigency private interests had to yield to the public good, and private individuals were restrained from the selfish and inconsiderate use even of their own forests. They were in fact prevented from wasting their capital to the de-

triment of others, as well as of themselves. They could not, for example, cut down the trees on lands which were unfit for any other product than that of wood. They could not fell the forests which were situated on steep slopes, the denudation of which would expose the neighbouring lands to destruction by avalanches or by floods. And the penalties for transgressing these rules were sufficiently deterrent—a fine of a franc for each square perch of land so laid bare, besides the obligation to place the land under wood again within not less than two years. Speaking generally, moreover, all operations in the woods belonging to private individuals as well as to the state, required the supervision and sanction of the State inspectors.

The result of these vigorous measures will be best understood by a short statement of the financial results of the working of the cantonal forests of Vaud, which cover roughly twenty-four thousand, five hundred acres.

1884. Receipts, 15,040 <i>l.</i>	Expenses, 8,800 <i>l.</i>
	Nett surplus, 6,240 <i>l.</i>
1885. Receipts, 15,382 <i>l.</i>	Expenses, 7,917 <i>l.</i>
	Nett surplus, 5,595 <i>l.</i>
1886. Receipts, 13,611 <i>l.</i>	Expenses, 6,647 <i>l.</i>
	Nett surplus, 6,964 <i>l.</i>

Striking the average therefore of these three years, the nett surplus of the working operations in the cantonal forests was six thousand, one hundred and sixty-six pounds a year. Each acre of forest therefore gave a free revenue of over five shillings an acre.

The country was thus in the space of twenty-five years—for the reports I have alluded to were dated 1859–60—placed in the first flight of European countries as to the results of its forest-working. For I find it stated that the French Forest Budget for 1886–7 (leaving Algiers out of the question) shows an income of twenty-seven million, six hundred and thirteen thousand francs, and an expenditure of fourteen million, two hundred and thirteen thousand, thus giving a sur-

<sup>1</sup> I have taken each thousand francs as equal to forty pounds sterling.

plus of thirteen million four hundred thousand francs. And as the total area of State forests is two million, five hundred and forty-five thousand acres, the free income amounted to 5·26 francs an acre. The forests of the Prussian provinces of Germany give an income of fifty-eight million, one hundred thousand marks, with an expenditure of thirty-four million, two hundred thousand marks, the surplus being twenty-three million, nine hundred thousand marks, which is equal to over six thousand, six hundred and forty-four acres to a net income of 3·6 marks an acre.

Although no department or State machinery that we are likely to establish in Great Britain can hope to exercise such control, or to work with so free a hand, as the Government of Switzerland, yet, in some respects—in respect, for example of the advantages afforded her by nature—England is well situated for the easy restoration of her forest-wealth. In the words of a professional visitor to our shores: “In spite of the deplorable effects of the rights of pasturage, the complete absence of underwood, and the direct destruction of the principal nutritive properties of the soil, we recognise that the oaks are of a very healthy growth. This is owing, no doubt, to the fact that under the maritime climate of Great Britain, practices which otherwise would be detestable, are inoffensive, thanks to the great moisture of the atmosphere.” It is no uncommon thing, moreover, to see land which is of no greater agricultural value than from twelve to fourteen shillings per acre bear larches which when sold realise from one shilling to one shilling and threepence for each cubic foot. And I have heard quite recently of a crop of Scotch fir of seventy-five years old, standing on ground, the annual value of which did not exceed ten shillings, valued for transfer at no less than one hundred and thirty-two pounds an acre. This, no doubt was an extreme instance. Still a crop of larch standing on ground

within reasonable distance of a railway or station-siding should be worth fifty pounds an acre when fifty years of age. And the thinnings in the interim should always yield something in the shape of revenue. It ought to be remembered, moreover, that while ordinary agricultural operations exhaust the soil, trees render it more fertile by the deposit of their dead leaves and detritus. This is well understood in Sologne, where the pine forms one of the regular rotation of crops, no manure being required for several years after its removal to make way for other crops.

I will conclude this short sketch of what may be done in the way of forestry in this country by recapitulating briefly the functions which the report of the Committee contemplates entrusting to the Board of Forestry, which it is proposed to establish, as an essential feature of the scheme.

These are :

- (a.) To organise schools, or at any rate, a course of instruction in forestry.
- (b.) To make provision for examinations.
- (c.) To prepare an official syllabus or text book.

I wonder if I may venture to add to these functions one that appears to me to be the most necessary of them all, although I may only claim for it here a modest place, and say

(d.) To prepare a map of the country, showing the woods now existing, and the places where each variety of tree finds its natural home.

We have seen that the area of land at present recognised as woodland is two million seven hundred and eighty-eight thousand acres; and I think I shall be well within the mark if I add at least an equal amount of land which is virtually waste—that is, either entirely thrown out of cultivation, or yearly receiving less attention from want of capital to expend on it. Much of this must be available for planting; for if we go back to inquire into its original condition we shall find that it was underwood, which has gradually

yielded before the extension of agriculture. I have now in my mind the two excellent maps displayed by the Japanese Commissioners on the walls of their section in the Edinburgh Forestry Exhibition. Japan is divided naturally into five regions, each having its own climate, and in consequence its own flora. One of the maps explained this distribution very clearly, the names of the particular species of trees which predominated in each region being set down in an accompanying schedule. A second map showed the geological formations occupied by the forests of Japan. The object of having such a map of Great Britain would be to show what and where to plant, with the best hopes of success. And while the question is, as I have already said, a matter primarily for the consideration of landed proprietors, these might justly look to the proposed Board of Forestry for professional advice, and for such assistance, either by way of subsidy, or by temporary exemption from the payment of rates on newly-planted lands, as it might be in their power to afford. In Switzerland the Confederation grants to the Communes and to the private proprietors alike a subsidy to the extent of from thirty to fifty per cent. of the total cost of planting, in the interest of the augmentation of the forest-surface, especially in the higher lands where the soil is otherwise unproductive. In addition to this concession young trees are supplied from the State nurseries at a price much below their prime cost.

It will require most delicate handling to carry out these functions. The Board can in no sense be constituted as an *Imperium in Imperio*, such as those which I have shown above were entrusted to the State department in Switzerland. It must, by the justice and by the usefulness of its actions, appeal to the consideration, and command the acquiescence of an educated people. I cannot do better than bring in here a little story to fully illustrate my meaning.

The department of the Hautes-Alpes in France was formerly subject to disastrous floods, which periodically washed away the best of the agricultural soil. These visitations were borne with more or less patience until the inundation of 1856 gave point to the frequently reiterated advice of M. Surell, engineer of roads and bridges, who insisted upon the reforestation of the mountains as the only successful remedy. Four years were required effectually to move public opinion; but in 1880 a law was passed prescribing planting, the preliminary operations of which were commenced the following year. The difficulties were twofold—first the nature of the soil, rugged, crumbling, unfit to receive plantations; and secondly, the opposition of the mountaineers, who saw in the proposal the spoliation of their pastures, and consequently of their herds, their only means of subsistence. The latter difficulty was overcome by sowing half of the ground intended to be reclaimed with grass; and the opposition of the mountaineers, which "had been pushed to fury, sometimes even to crime," sank for the moment into passive sullenness. The regeneration of the soil was more tedious. This was accomplished by barring the interior of the deep ravines and accumulating the *debris*, by cutting horizontal banks supported by wattle fences, and by planting on these saplings of from three to four years old, which were cut close to the ground once or twice until the vigour of the shoots testified to the development of the roots and the activity of the vegetation. The kind of trees planted varied, of course, with reference to the nature of the soil.

The success of these operations was rapid and complete. Those parts of the mountains which were thus treated were no longer recognisable: the soil acquired such solidity that the most violent storms, notably those of 1868, which had formerly been the cause of such disasters in the

department, were quite inoffensive in the regenerated portions. The mountains in a very short time became productive. Where formerly sheep had found a scanty subsistence, abundant crops capable of being mowed with the seythe were now to be found. The population, essentially pastoral, found henceforth nourishment and bedding for their flocks and herds either in the grass or in the leaves of the trees. The acacias, moreover, gave them poles suitable for the cultivation of the vine. Thus these people, who had formerly been most hostile, became the staunchest supporters of the Forest Administration. And, while all this indirect good was effected, the proprietors found that they had not only been relieved of the necessity for providing expensive and precarious means of defence against floods, but that their lands, formerly worthless, had acquired a considerable value.

I have given this story, which is taken from official sources, at considerable length for two reasons.

Firstly, because I know that the larch grows fast on the south-west wastes of Ireland if not too much exposed to westerly winds, and that from twenty-two to twenty-five years of age it is capable of yielding a valuable return as material for pit wood,—the properties on which it has been grown having meanwhile been fertilised by the dropping of the “needles.” Secondly, because it would be an act of true political wisdom if we assisted in the improvement of waste lands, even although the return for such outlay should not be immediately forthcoming. I can wish the proposed Board of Forestry, when and if it is constituted, no higher honour than the contentment and gratitude of an appreciative people, for some of whom it may hope to find useful employment, which is now denied them by the present state of agriculture in this country.

GEORGE CADELL.  
(Late Indian Forest Department.)

## SOMETHING LIKE A BAG.

(SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN ELEPHANT-KRALA IN CEYLON.)

THE possibility of enjoying new amusements is rapidly lessening, as facility of communication increases and universal travel becomes the marked characteristic of the age of steam. To catch gigantic salmon in the streams of Norway, to shoot a grizzly bear in the Rocky Mountains, or to enjoy a tiger hunt in the jungles of the Maharajah of Kooch-pa-warna, has become as common an occupation with the traveller as the slaughter of partridges on English stubble or the ascent of Snowdon in August. But one may surely claim for an elephant-kraal on a large scale an element of rarity mingled with excitement which it would be hard to match; while the very size and value of the game in view raises the sport at once above the ordinary level. There are moreover two other sides to the enterprise, which certainly do not characterize all forms of sport: there is, if it is properly managed, a complete and refreshing absence of cruelty; while there is on the other hand a wide field for the exercise of pluck, endurance, skill in woodcraft, and knowledge of the habits of the animal to be captured. For whatever may be said or thought by the writers of sporting-books, there is undoubtedly something revolting about the mere slaughter of an elephant. Of course there is just the possibility of a spice of danger: just the off-chance of the animal's charging you in a blind, blundering sort of way, and bowling you over in his stride; but he is not really a hard animal to come up to: a skilful tracker and ordinary precautions will bring you to within ten yards of him, and then to shoot him is about as brave and skilful a deed as to shoot a milch cow in a farm-yard. But an

elephant-kraal ranks infinitely higher in the way of sport; and at the same time affords one of the most picturesque sights, one of the most interesting studies of native manners and jungle life, that it is possible to imagine.

The scene of our kraal is laid in so unapproachable and unpronounceable a part of an unknown district of Ceylon, that the only way of describing it shortly is to say that it is at least forty miles from anywhere. After leaving the skirts of civilization, a long day's and night's struggle over dusty tracks and across obnoxious water-courses brings us at last to the spot where our camp has been pitched. Not an uninteresting place in itself; for half-way up the queer cylindrical rock that overhangs our tents a Singalese potentate of old days built himself a great palace. This was afterwards adopted as a temporary abode by one of the many fugitive kings whom the vicissitudes of Singalese politics turned out of their permanent residences; but he was wise enough to carry with him in his flight that world-famous palladium, the tooth of Buddha, and rich enough to build for it a beautiful shrine, the great stairway of which has lately been restored under the enlightened policy of the present governor of Ceylon. There is something weird and startling in coming across these beautiful remains of an early civilization in so remote and desolate a spot. The fine upward sweep of the stairway, the delicate chiselling of the ornamented balustrade, the life-like posturings of the quaint dancers on the frieze, once pleased the eyes and excited the wonder of a teeming population, long since gone down into dusty death; and are

now scarce noticed in their decay by the casual villager in search of honey or herbs, or by the solitary hermit at the little Buddhist shrine near the hill.

But just at present the secluded spot is alive with an absolutely unprecedented bustle. Carts and tents and elephants and servants are arriving every hour : huts are being rapidly erected with leaves of the cocoanut and talipot palm ; and the hair of the old hermit, if he had any, would stand on end at hearing the sound of English ladies' voices, and the pop of exuberant soda-water bottles. Our camp looks very picturesque as we reach it, weary and travel-stained, in the cool of the evening (if indeed coolness is ever a possible attribute of these arid regions) passing through rows of little shops that have sprung up like mushrooms on the roadside ; descriing the dim form of a huge tame elephant, a future gladiator of the final fight, calmly browsing in a neighbouring clearing ; and hailing with contentment the sight of the fires that tell of a possible dinner and a hot bath—though truly the colour of the water is very suggestive of buffaloes, and severely tests all our vows of cleanliness. And from time to time we can hear afar off some scattered shots and dim, confused shouting, telling us that the great game we have come to see captured is at least within ear shot.

The first day or two we settle down in camp, and amuse ourselves as best we can with such intellectual pursuits as rounders and Aunt Sally, highly impromptu concerts, and the heartiest of midnight suppers : religiously resisting every temptation to go near the scene of operations ; and contenting ourselves with such scraps of news as we can glean from natives passing to and from the field of battle. For former kraals have always been delayed, and often spoilt, by the anxiety of the British visitor to prove that he knows more of the elephant and his ways than the native hunter ;

and an officious determination to assist has turned out to be the most complete hindrance imaginable. This time the native is to be allowed to work his wicked will in his own particular way ; and the result will doubtless testify to the wisdom of the self-sacrifice. But by the third day human nature and English impatience could stand it no longer. All our novels had been read, and the amount of tobacco consumed was something appalling to estimate : a flattering assurance from the captain of the hunt, that "we could do no harm now," armed us with the necessary permission ; and off we set in the early morning for a day with the beaters.

But perhaps before describing the sights we saw, it may be as well to give some account of the method in which elephants are captured. A kraal is an extremely simple thing in theory. The only difficulty lies in its manipulation. The first point is to fix upon the place—the kraal or corral—into which the game is to be finally driven. This is usually constructed artificially by means of a square wooden stockade lined with musket-men : in the present case Nature had provided the corral free of charge. Close to the road along which we travelled, two gigantic reefs of abrupt rock run parallel to one another for about a quarter of a mile. They enclose some six or eight acres of jungle : their sides are almost precipitous, and the entrance and exit are narrow and concealed in trees. Legend says that the old Singalese kings held royal kraals here in days of old : eliminate some twenty Europeans, add a little gaudy state and ceremonial, and it is not very difficult to recall the scene. Having settled on your kraal, it is logically necessary to find your quarry ; and here again no great difficulty occurs, as many a poor cultivator will tell you, who has to spend long nights and much firewood in driving away the marauders from his little patch of grain. The search-parties came upon three convenient

herds very soon after their quest began, gradually drove them together, and succeeded in enclosing between fifty and sixty. This feat, which might appear to the uninitiated to be the consummation, is really only the commencement of the business. It is a difficult achievement to drive a herd of English cattle along the streets of a town on market-day: it is a difficult achievement to conduct an Irish pig, after purchase, to his new quarters: multiply these difficulties by fifty, and it is possible to conceive some notion of the trouble involved in forcing a herd of wild elephants towards a given spot. For, to begin with, there are certain requisites as regards the line of country to be chosen. In the first place the drive must be through thick jungle: once get the herd into the open, and the game is up; for mystery and covers beget success, while familiarity, say both copy-books and shikaris, breeds contempt. Let the mammoths get a fair view of the pigmy forces distracting them with such hideous noises, and a fair field to operate in—and the result would be too obvious to be worth discussing. So, too, all roads, village-paths, open water-courses, and habitations of man must be carefully avoided; while at the same time the country chosen must contain a sufficiency of fodder and water, or the ultimate result will be disastrous in more ways than one. Secondly, although it would be comparatively easy to drive a herd of elderly male elephants, it is not these, but the females, and more especially the youngsters, which form the really valuable part of the herd, and, as if knowing their own value, give all the trouble. It is nearly always a female that leads the forlorn hope and heads the most reckless charges; and she and her progeny must be kept at all costs within the charmed circle, however hard she may seek to prove that, in the elephantine as in the human world, it is in vain to speculate, *furens quid femina possit.*

The operations of a Singalese kraal

are based on a semi-military formation, which perhaps, for antiquity, throws the Macedonian phalanx into the shade. Whatever the exact scientific name may be, the civilian mind would describe it as a movable oblong; and one in which, contrary to most military precedents, the post of honour is in the rear, the reason being that the back line does nearly all the beating, and that wild elephants almost invariably charge back and not forwards. The length of the front and of the back line is about a quarter of a mile, that of each side line very nearly a mile; and as the component male elements of the line are stationed very close together, for the joint purpose of conversation and safety, the number of men employed is obviously considerable. Add to the actual beaters the sutlers and camp-followers of the little army, the mere spectators, and the enterprising array of hawkers, and the computation rises with astonishing rapidity.

A visit to the "lines" in the early morning fully repays you for the thorny struggle of three miles through the low, close jungle. The camp is awake and stirring—has been stirring, in fact, since the very earliest sign of dawn appeared—and is fully occupied in that most important duty, the preparation of the morning meal. You pass along one continuous row of the neatest little huts imaginable, formed of nothing but four sticks and a few dried leaves of the talipot palm; and, in front of the huts, an equally continuous row of fires, for the enemy cooped up within the inclosure is far more afraid of flame and smoke than of his human opponents. On the safe side of the fires, then, it is possible to eat, drink, and be merry with perfect composure, and very savoury are the simple messes that are steaming and simmering on every side. But two features at once strike you as peculiar, in a Singalese crowd—the utter absence of the female sex, and the presence of the most extraordinary collection of fire-arms that

mortal eye ever beheld. The courage necessary to enable you to face a raging elephant in his native jungles is no doubt considerable: the nerve required to fire off one of these old-world weapons is infinitely greater. Here is an aged single-barrelled horse-pistol, such as one dimly remembers to have seen in cheap illustrated editions of *Dick Turpin's Adventures* or *The Life of Jack Sheppard*: there a marvellous and equally venerable musket with a barrel several yards long, the metal of which is worn so thin that you could easily squash it between two fingers. The guns being dangerous enough in themselves, the native method of loading does not render them less so. The great point of the charge appears to be quantity, regardless of proportion and result. You may only have one shot in the day, so let it be a good one; and if, as often happens in the early morning, you are not quite sure whether the gun is loaded or not, ram in another charge or two, to make assurance doubly sure. Moreover wads are an absurd and costly luxury in the jungle: a piece of rag torn from the end of your cloth does infinitely better; and if you can't borrow or steal the village ramrod, which the headman insists on monopolising, bump your stock on the ground so as to give the charge a fair chance of settling.

The "early birds" of the camp, having already finished their "little breakfast," are gracefully reclining in the shelter of their cabins; and, their weapons being loaded in the efficient manner described and lying ready to hand, are (mark the advance of civilisation!) loading their minds in a somewhat similar manner with literature. For the book-hawker, with his queer little tin box full of cheap pamphlets, almost as miscellaneous as the contents of a kraal musket, is a camp follower of the first importance; and the local booksellers are doing a roaring trade this morning in a Singalese account of the Queen's Jubilee, garnished with a gruesome

portrait of the Queen's most excellent and most travestied Majesty. Such as cannot read (still perhaps the majority) are endeavouring, with the help of their neighbours, to recall certain potent charms against furious elephants, which they have learnt from their wise men; while those two invariable characters, the oldest inhabitant and the village wag, have each a little knot of admirers, hanging respectively on the utterances of gray wisdom or grinning folly.

But the sun is well up by this time, and a sort of instinctive sensation or rumour, carried no one knows how, runs round the camp that the morning drive is to commence; so while the neat little huts are being rolled up into equally neat little bundles, to be carried, with the precious cooking-utensils, to the next halting-place, we make our way to the back line, and are not long in finding ourselves in the presence of the captain of the hunt. He is a fine brawny specimen of a Singalese gentleman, and on great occasions, when he is attending a Governor's *levée*, for instance, or welcoming a new revenue-officer, is a very smart, bedizened personage indeed. At present his costume is rather adapted to circumstances than remarkable for abundance. A handkerchief round his head, the suspicion of a cloth round his loins, sandals on his feet, and the rest—as Nature made it, with the exception of a huge meerschaum pipe, from which he is enjoying a few final puffs; while near him stands a trusty and lusty henchman with his Winchester repeater and his double-barrelled express. The news he has to give us is chequered with evil tidings. Last night a bold attempt was made to drive the elephants by torch-light, but, like other night-attacks not unknown to history, it ended in partial failure, which might have been total discomfiture. A glorious success attended the first rush, and then unluckily the back line, confused by darkness and thick jungle, took up too forward a position,

planted their fires, and found they had shut off one half of the herd, with the result that twenty-five of the enemy escaped scot-free and were seen no more! However there were known to be at least twenty elephants still in the toils: everything was ready for the fray, and we were soon in the thick of it. Words could not describe the hideous din of the onslaught: the shrieks and the yells, the taunts and the invectives, the discord of horns and rattles; and in front the dull crashing of the huge beasts through the jungle, varied by occasional volleys of musketry, as some great laggard in the rear turned for a moment to face his opponents. Then there would be curious moments of simultaneous silence, and it was possible, by a little creeping and manoeuvring, to get close up to the quarry as they stood listening suspiciously in some thick thorn-brake, doubting in which direction to seek escape, until a sudden panic started the unwieldy ranks into a heavy trot, and the trees and creepers parted to right and left, beyond reach of eye and ear, and we waited anxiously for the first tell-tale shot, announcing that the foe had arrived at, and been repulsed from, the further limit.

And so we hunted the great beasts well into the noon, oblivious of the heat and regardless of the thorns. Excitement is a marvellous antidote to hunger and fatigue, nor was there any thought of either until a halt was called. The lines took up their position with amazing rapidity: fires were lit and muskets re-loaded; and we threw ourselves down under a mighty banyan tree, and sent rapid messengers to the rear for sandwiches and soda-water.

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It is the last day of the hunt. The elephants have been driven bit by bit into a patch of jungle not a quarter of a mile from the yawning entrance to the kraal, which has every right to be inscribed with the motto over Dante's famous portal. It only

wants a vigorous effort to thrust them into it, and that effort is about to be made. We take a tempting position up a patriarchal tree that commands both the jungle-prison and the kraal-mouth. It is curious how extremely brave you feel at a kraal when you are safely astride of a firm branch; how you criticise the operations of the beaters and musket-men, and courageously chaff your friends below whose want of activity has deprived them of a similar excuse for bravery. But there is a terrible obstacle in the way of final success, in the shape of what is fondly called "the high road," though it is merely a sandy track, remarkable for the undetermined depth of its ruts. This lies right across the line of march: can the elephants be got over it in broad daylight? For we have had enough of night-attacks and torchlight failures. The struggle is soon raging beneath us; and for a good hour we can trace the evolutions of the "heady fight," and the movements of the enemy and their pursuers, in the swaying of the tree-tops and the crashing of the jungle, and the shrill trumpetings of fear and rage, and the shouts and shots of the dusky army. Closer and closer it comes, up to the very verge of the road, but nothing will persuade the giants to break through the fringe of trees: again and again they break back, facing fire and smoke rather than publicity; only to be driven forward again, by volley upon volley of blank cartridge and an ever increasing array of beaters; until at last a great head, with sensitive trunk outstretched, comes peering out of the thick bushes, and a tentative foot paws the sandy rut. The prospect is plainly not encouraging, for the monstrous body is on the point of turning round again; but luckily the beaters guess, or are told of, the state of affairs. Pandemonium let loose could not have excelled the outburst of triumphant hubbub: the die is cast, and the crossing of the Rubicon commences. The enemy are led by an

enormous bull, who scorns to hurry, and proudly marches, as though with the honours of war, from the evacuated fortress: then follows a female, perhaps the queen of his harem, much occupied with the protection of her two tiny calves; and it is touching to see how carefully she guides and guards one with her trunk, while the other holds on lustily with his trunk to her stumpy apology for a tail. The rest of the herd are less interesting and less dignified: there is no attempt to defend the rear, which is seized with the sentiment of *sauve qui peut*: helter-skelter they rush over the blinding sand, and are lost to view in the thick trees that guard and conceal the fatal entrance. They are given but a short repose in this last shelter; just long enough for the attacking army to eat the midday rice, but sufficient for one more despairing effort on the part of the besieged. We have left our coign of vantage and are standing on the road, chatting to a hungry musketeer and rejoicing with him over the success of the morning's efforts, when suddenly there is heard the rush of a heavy body through the trees close to us, and out bursts the great bull into the open, his trunk curled up tight for striking, his tail in air, and a look of desperate wickedness in his rolling eye. But the besiegers are ready for him, even at rice-time: guns are seized in an instant, and a fierce volley greets and stops him ere he has time to pass the watch-fires: he hesitates, and the elephant, like the man, who does so, is lost. Two bold sentries step forward and pepper his feet and trunk with small-shot: the line closes on him, firing as it closes: a great shout runs down the length of it, and the champion, finding the better part of valour in discretion, retires with uncurled trunk and drooping tail.

The battle is practically over. The entrance to the kraal is rendered more and more inevitable by gradually closing lines: the herd wanders into it almost unconsciously: a stockade,

corresponding to the one at the further end, is run up and lined with guns, and the prisoners have begun their captivity. The scene at the summit of the amphitheatre (if one may apply such a term to an oblong) is picturesque in the extreme. Spectators from every village in the neighbourhood have been pouring in all the morning, and the fairer (or shall we say gentler?) sex is at last allowed to appear now that the danger is over. Brilliant and dazzling are the colours scattered over the black volcanic rock that rises from a sea of jungle: wild and terror-stricken are the rushes of the huge captives in the toils: most audible is the buzz of contented conversation above, most pitiable the trumpeting of impotent rage below.

But the wild herd is weary at last of tearing up and down the narrow arena, for the heat is very great, and the low jungle is trampled down sufficiently to admit of successful operations. The stockade at the entrance is opened, and the four tame elephants march stealthily in. Each carries two mahouts and plentiful store of strong rope, while by the side, or rather under the cover, of each walk two men armed with sharp spears and two nooses. The leader of the tame gang is a mighty tusker, on whose courage and coolness everything depends, for the other three are but novices, and five to one is long odds in a mammoth battle. The object to be gained is to approach the captives so quietly as not to startle them into a series of wild gallops, to cut off one of their number by a well-timed flank movement, and to hem him in. Then will the clever nooser do his work, and slip a deft loop over the hind foot directly it is lifted, while his comrade fastens the other end to a neighbouring tree, and—*actum est de elephanto*. But there is many a slip between the lasso and the elephantine foot. All goes smoothly at first. The decoys steal knowingly along the side of the rock-wall to within ten yards of the herd, stopping or advancing according

to each sign of apprehension or confidence, when suddenly the wild ones scent danger, and, escape being impossible, determine on resistance. The huge champion of the herd challenges the tusker, in knightly fashion, to single combat, and advances on him with stooping head and a reverberating roar. You can almost hear the great skulls crash together, so near do they approach, when out step the spearmen in the nick of time, and strike their keen spears into the soft flesh of the trunk, and the charge is averted. But the champion's followers are bent on mischief in spite of his discomfiture: charge follows charge with furious frequency: one of the tame ones is in full flight for the rear, and the tusker and his satellites have all they can do to save the retreat from turning into a fatal rout. An exciting incident happens just below us. A spearman has delivered his thrust at a charging foe, but the spear breaks short off near the head, and remains sticking in the elephant's trunk. He retires, disarmed, to the shelter of the tusker, trips over a root, and falls prone. His enemy is upon him in an instant, bending his head to crush him. It is a sickening moment. One cannot breathe. Suddenly the beast starts back with a shriek of pain and rushes up the arena. The spearhead in his trunk caught in the ground as he was delivering the fatal blow, and

gave him such a wrench as he will hardly forget in a week, and the man is saved.

It takes some time to bring up the tame elephants to the attack again, for the first defeat was demoralizing in the extreme, and it is not until a plentiful feed, numerous incantations, and the arrival of a fifth ally have restored their courage that the perilous game recommences. But the wild ones are by this time exhausted with their very wildness, and gather into detached, weary knots: their charges are mere feints, and at last a straggler is hemmed into a likely corner. One moment of suspense as the nooser creeps noiselessly up to him: a wild, abortive struggle with the unyielding tree, and the first fruits of the hunt are securely reaped. The remainder of the work is comparatively easy. Success breeds success, and one after the other the victims fall to the wiles of their pursuers. The moon rises over the strange scene as we leave it for the camp: the rocks are alive with little fires that form the centres of chattering, hungry groups: the sea of jungle is very calm and pale: the grim prisoners below are straining hopelessly at their fetters, and sniffing sullenly at the food thrown to them; and a glorious week's sport has reached a happy end.

S. M. BURROWS.

## DR. JOHNSON'S STYLE.

THE critic who examines the variations in Dr. Johnson's style labours under the disadvantages of one who deals with a subject probably unfamiliar to most of his readers. Of his prose works scarcely anything is now read except a few of the Lives of the Poets: *Rasselas* indeed is not forgotten, yet the chances are that an allusion to it is not understood even among people of some reading. The *Rambler* and *The Idler* have even passed beyond the affectation of those who are unwilling to be thought ignorant of the great monuments of literature. No one is tempted to pretend that he has read them, for no reputation would be gained thereby. They have, to use Johnson's own words, been "swept away by time," and now lie "among the refuse of fame." It is idle to ask whether this neglect is deserved. Johnson himself, when speaking of the judgment which had been slowly formed of Addison's *Cato*, maintained that "about things on which the public thinks long, it commonly attains to think right." In another passage he remarks that "what is good only because it pleases cannot be pronounced good till it has been found to please." *The Rambler* and *The Idler* did not greatly please even the generation for which they were written.

It has been asserted that in Johnson's writings three periods can be traced. In his earlier works and in his later he is, it is maintained, much simpler and easier than in those of his middle age. "Between the years 1750 and 1758 his style was, I think," writes Malone, "in its hardest and most laboured state." If Malone, as I have no doubt, meant to include the period in which were published *The Rambler*, *The Adventurer*, and *The Idler*, he should have closed it with

the year 1760. The publication of *The Idler*, which began in the spring of 1758, lasted two years all but ten days. Murphy traces "the pomp of diction" which was for the first time assumed in *The Rambler*, to the influence that the preparation of the *Dictionary* had on Johnson's mind. "As he grew familiar with technical and scholastic words, he thought that the bulk of his readers were equally learned; or at least would admire the splendour and dignity of his style." Both these critics, in the judgment at which they have arrived, have, I believe, examined merely Johnson's style as an essayist. They have not looked at his miscellaneous writings that belong to the same period. In them I fail to discover any unusual "pomp of diction," or anything harder or more laboured than is met with in the compositions of his earlier or later manhood. The Preface to the *Dictionary*, the *Life* of Sir Thomas Browne, the *Review* of Jonas Hanway's *Journal*, and of Soame Jenyns's *Nature and Origin of Evil*, which were written about the middle of this period of ten years, are free from any excess of mannerisms. In fact Boswell himself, though he says that Johnson's style "was considerably easier in the Lives of the Poets than in *The Rambler*," yet in the numerous papers that his friend wrote for *The Literary Magazine* in 1756 can find one instance only "in which he had indulged his *Brownism*," meaning thereby that Anglo-Latian diction in which Sir Thomas Browne delighted. What can be simpler than the following lines in which we are told of Browne's birth and education? They might be taken as a model of simplicity by all biographers.

"Sir Thomas Browne was born at London in the parish of St. Michael in Cheapside on

the 19th of October, 1605. His father was a merchant, of an ancient family at Upton, in Cheshire. Of the name or family of his mother I find no account. Of his childhood or youth there is little known, except that he lost his father very early; that he was, according to the common fate of orphans, defrauded by one of his guardians; and that he was placed for his education at the school of Winchester."

What, to quote an instance from another kind of writing, can be freer from "pomp of diction" than the following sarcastic attack on Soame Jenyns?

"I am told that this pamphlet is not the effort of hunger; what can it be then but the product of vanity? And yet how can vanity be gratified by plagiarism or transcription? When this speculator finds himself prompted to another performance, let him consider whether he is about to disburden his mind or employ his fingers; and if I might venture to offer him a subject I should wish that he would solve this question: Why he that has nothing to write should desire to be a writer?"

The difference in style which Malone and Murphy insist on, which Boswell to some extent allows, and for which Lord Macaulay, as I shall presently show, has an explanation of his own, must, I readily admit, strike any one who, after some familiarity with Johnson's biographical writings, takes up for the first time his essays. The Ramblers undoubtedly differ in style from Johnson's earlier writings. In his previous compositions scattered passages can be readily found which are cast in the same mould, but the very first Rambler is all of one piece, woven of one texture, of more gorgeous threads, of a more elaborate pattern, and in a more stately loom. For this "pomp of diction," this exuberance of language, a simpler and a more natural explanation may be found than that which Murphy gives. Johnson came before the world in a new character—a character which, as it commonly seeks a peculiar and a dignified dress, so still more commonly adopts a certain stateliness of language. In his Rambler he appeared as "a majestic teacher of moral and religious wisdom." If he did not

wear the gown of the preacher, or of the doctor in some ancient university, at all events he clothed his lessons in a style which, to borrow his own words, would "have given dignity to a bishop." In his last Rambler he tells his readers that "it has been his principal design to inculcate wisdom or piety." It will be found, if I am not mistaken, that when he is didactic, when he is "pointing a moral," he labours the most. To him who preaches and to him who teaches, amplification and repetition come almost naturally. Each truth, as it is enunciated, is first set forth with a certain simplicity of language, and is then decked in all the pomp that words can lend. It should not be forgotten that Johnson, in the midst of all his big words, is entirely free from one fault which is common to some of the greatest and the most contemptible of writers. If he forces foreign words into the language he never forces foreign idioms. He protests, both by words and by example, against "the license of translators, whose idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of France." He charges Milton with "forming his style by a perverse and pedantic principle. He was desirous to use English words with foreign idiom."

The explanation that I have just given of the change in Johnson's style, though it accounts for much, yet it does not account for all the amplifications that weary the reader in *The Rambler* and *The Adventurer*. In both these papers he was writing under conditions which are the greatest temptation to diffuseness. He had not only to express his thoughts, but to make them in each number cover a certain space. If they in themselves would not go far enough, the gaps had to be filled up with words. With his wonderful command of language it was the easiest of tasks to support each substantive with three adjectives, where two or even one would have sufficed; and in a second swelling sentence to tell over again in fresh and

sonorous phrases what he had already perfectly well expressed in a first. Many a Rambler, no doubt, or at all events, many a passage in many a Rambler, was written with a full mind, the words fitly clothing and not padding out the thoughts. Nevertheless this superabundance of language too generally characterises his essays. It was a fault into which he too easily fell. Boswell has pointed out, how even in his talk he would sometimes repeat his thoughts in varied style. "Talking of the comedy of The Rehearsal, he said, 'It has not wit enough to keep it sweet.' This was easy; he therefore caught himself, and pronounced a more round sentence: 'It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.'" But if he had begun with a sentence that was not easy but round, he could just as readily follow it up with another that was no less round, in which he should do very little more than say over again what he had already said with great force and perfect propriety. Perhaps Burke was thinking of this habit of his old friend when, in opposing Boswell vehemently in his admiration of Croft's imitation of Johnson's style, he exclaimed: "No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp without his force; it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength; it has all the contortions of the sybil without the inspiration." "I hate triplets in prose," said Cowper, when writing about Johnson's needless multiplication of words. Cowper, happily for him, author though he was, knew nothing of that state of life in which "triplets in prose," or some substitute for them, are a temptation which often overcomes the severest virtue.

If this needless parade of language is partly due to the necessity under which Johnson lay in each number to fill up a certain space, we should expect to find fewer signs of it in The Idler. It is not only a shorter paper than The Rambler or The Adventurer, but, unlike them, it varies

in length. Numbers fifty-eight and fifty-nine, for instance, taken together are not so long by half a page as Number sixty, while the one hundred and three Idlers fill no more pages in the edition of Johnson's collected writings than sixty-two Ramblers. It was published originally in the columns of a newspaper. Johnson, as it seems probable, wrote for each number as much as he found convenient. While composing his weekly essay (for it appeared but once a week) he no longer was tempted, to use his own words, to "run his finger down the margin to see how many lines he had written, and how few he had to make."

Now Boswell himself states, and states with perfect justice, that "The Idler has less body and more spirit than The Rambler, and greater facility of language." Part of this is no doubt due to the fact that the subjects selected are, generally speaking, somewhat lighter, but part also may be attributed to the freedom in which Johnson wrote. In his Debates in Parliament, which were finished seven years before Malone's second period begins, his style was not much less laboured than in The Rambler. In these he was exposed to just the same temptation. He had a certain number of columns of the Gentleman's Magazine to fill, and Cave, the proprietor, was "a penurious paymaster, who would contract for lines by the hundred, and expect the long hundred." Fielding, in one of his happiest images, compares a certain class of "painful and voluminous historians" first of all, "to a newspaper, which consists of just the same number of words, whether there be any news in it or not"; and secondly, "to a stage-coach, which performs constantly the same course empty as well as full." Johnson, both in his Debates and his periodical essays, now and then lets the world see what a brave show he could still make as he rattled along, though he had next to no luggage and scarcely a passenger left.

When he wrote with a full mind and

untroubled by any thoughts of columns to be filled, at all periods of his life he showed his ease and his vigour. In his letters little change in his diction can be traced from the first one to the last. They vary indeed greatly, but the variety is due not to the effect of years, but to the subject. In his long correspondence with Mrs. Thrale his last letters are less easy than those which he wrote when he was still sure of her affection, and when he was not overshadowed by the gloom of his own rapidly-approaching end. Lord Macaulay, in writing of the *Lives of the Poets*, says :

"Savage's *Life* Johnson reprinted nearly as it had appeared in 1744. Whoever, after reading that life, will turn to the other lives will be struck by the difference of style. Since Johnson had been at ease in his circumstances he had written little and had talked much. When therefore he, after the lapse of years, resumed his pen, the mannerism which he had contracted while he was in the constant habit of elaborate composition was less perceptible than formerly; and his diction frequently had a colloquial ease which it had formerly wanted. The improvement may be discerned by a skilful critic in the *Journey to the Hebrides*, and in the *Lives of the Poets* it is so obvious that it cannot escape the notice of the most careless reader."

*Taxation no Tyranny* was written after the *Journey to the Hebrides*. Can the skilful critic discern the improvement in colloquial ease in it? Boswell himself describes it as "a rhapsody," and denies that it has "that felicity of expression for which Johnson was upon other occasions so eminent." I venture to assert that, to both the skilful critic and the uncritical reader, the *Life of Savage*, which was written when Johnson was "in the constant habit of elaborate composition," will be found freer from mannerism than the *Journey to the Hebrides*, in spite of the twelve years which he had enjoyed of almost complete freedom from writing and of unrestrained indulgence in talk. If we look for "colloquial ease" in his compositions, where can we find more than in the following extract from a letter to Mrs. Thrale, written almost nine years before the

publication of the *Lives of the Poets* began? He is jesting, as he often does jest, about his host, Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne, a divine "whose size and figure and countenance and manner were that of a hearty English squire, with the parson super-induced," and whose "talk was of bullocks."

"I have seen the great bull, and very great he is. I have seen likewise his heir apparent, who promises to inherit all the bulk and all the virtues of his sire. I have seen the man who offered an hundred guineas for the great bull, while he was little better than a calf. Matlock, I am afraid, I shall not see, but I purpose to see Dovedale; and after all this seeing I hope to see you."

Six years later, when his style should have become easier, if Macaulay's criticism is sound, he wrote to her,

"Every man has those about him who wish to soothe him into inactivity and delitescence, nor is there any semblance of kindness more vigorously to be repelled than that which voluntarily offers a vicarious performance of the tasks of life, and conspires with the natural love of ease against diligence and perseverance."

Such a passage as this is in the true Rambler style, having all the mannerism which Johnson was supposed to have lost by his long intermission from "the constant habit of elaborate composition." That some effect was produced by this repose cannot be questioned, for in the case of any man who had a style to be affected such a change could not fail to exert its influence. That it had any great effect I see no reason to believe. Two causes, and two alone, are, in my opinion, sufficient to account for the ease of the diction of the *Lives of the Poets*. The subject was such as naturally clothed itself in a lighter style, and the author was under no restraint to write a single word more than he pleased. It is true that Johnson, in comparing himself with his contemporaries as a writer of biography, said, "The dogs don't know how to write trifles with dignity." But his dignity in his *Lives* very rarely oppresses his readers. There

is nothing of the bishop about it. He has many tales to tell, but few morals to point. From the unhappy slavery of "copy" he was now altogether free. He had undertaken to write a brief preface to each poet, "an advertisement," to use his own words, "like those which we find in the French Miscellanies, containing a few dates and a general character." It was by his love of his subject that he was carried away to swell these Advertisements into those admirable Lives, which by the student of literature are read and read again and again with ever-increasing admiration and delight. "I have been led," he says, "beyond my intention, I hope, by the honest desire of giving useful pleasure." From his capacious mind, stored with the memories and the reflections of the forty years that he had passed in "the full tide of human existence," and with the anecdotes and the traditions handed down from one generation of literary men to another, his narrative flowed in all the freedom of perfect ease. He had nothing but his indolence with which to struggle. There was "no penurious paymaster," no printer calling for more "copy," no fixed number of sheets which must be covered with a fixed number of words before the hand had moved to a fixed place on the clock. He was free, to use his own words, "from the great temptation to beat his little gold to a spacious surface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to spirit." The measure which he gave was indeed good, for it ran over from very abundance.

Lord Macaulay, in his admirable biography of Johnson, silently corrects the harsh judgment which five-and-twenty years before he had passed on Johnson's style. He can

now see its merits as well as its faults, and no longer condemns it as "systematically vicious." This censure is, in my eyes, not only harsh, but even ungrateful, for among the imitators of Johnson I have long reckoned his critic. I do not for one moment maintain that the style of the younger writer is founded on the style of the elder. But in Johnson, and in Johnson alone among the older authors, I find parallels for certain peculiarities in Macaulay. He would be an acute critic who could, without any hesitation, decide from the style alone that the following passages, which I have taken from the Lives of the Poets, are not to be found in the Essays contributed to the Edinburgh Review or in the *History of England*:

"Criticism was for a while lost in wonder ; no rules of judgment were applied to a book written in open defiance of truth and regularity. But when distinction came to be made, the part which gave the least pleasure was that which describes the Flying Island, and that which gave most disgust must be the history of the Houyhnhnms."

"He is proud that his book was presented to the King and Queen by the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole ; he is proud that they had read it before ; he is proud that the edition was taken off by the nobility and persons of the first distinction."

"For many years the name of George Lyttelton was seen in every account of every debate in the House of Commons. He opposed the standing army ; he opposed the excise ; he supported the motion for petitioning the King to remove Walpole."

As in Lord Macaulay's writings I come upon passage after passage that seems formed on such models as these, I am tempted to apply to them the words which he applied to Miss Burney's imitations of the author of *The Rambler* : "This is a good style of its kind. . . . We say with confidence either Sam Johnson or the Devil."

G. BIRKBECK HILL.

## MY UNCLE'S CLOCK.

I HAVE heard people talk a good deal about my grandfather's clock, but I really think that my uncle's clock was a more remarkable thing. I did not notice anything peculiar about it in his lifetime, except that it was always stopped, being in this respect the exact opposite of that well-known clock of everybody's grandfather which went on ticking to the exact moment of the old gentleman's death. My uncle's clock stood in his bed-room, on the mantelpiece ; and I always wondered that he, who liked everything about him to be in order, wound up, and working punctually, should allow this solitary specimen of incapacity to stare him in the face night and morning with a lying account of the hour. Once or twice when my uncle has been ill and I have gone to see him, I have walked up to that clock with the intention of setting it going and putting it right, but my uncle always stopped me with the significant remark : "I rather think I'd let that clock alone, if I were you, James."

I took the hint without asking any questions. My uncle was not the sort of man who would stand a catechism very well ; indeed, there were some points concerning his personal history, and the manner in which he had made his fortune, about which his most intimate friend, if at all a prudent man, would judge it best to make few inquiries. I do not mean that my uncle was not an honourable member of society, and a very useful one too : many owners of valuable estates, many county families remember him still with respectful gratitude ; but his occupation was of a very peculiar sort, one which would not bear much talking about : he was, in fact, a remover of ghosts.

What he did with the ghosts when he had got them nobody could guess. He did not travel with much luggage, and could not have carried them away in his boxes. They were not in his own home : a quieter, better-ordered establishment than that never existed : the very rats were not allowed to make a noise there. One thing only was certain, that when he undertook to remove a ghost that ghost never went back again : it was heard of no more. His knowledge of the world of phantoms was immense : I think I may say unique. He had studied all the existing literature of the subject, until there was not a ghost anywhere in the three kingdoms with whose habits, weaknesses, and prejudices he was not familiar. Not a phantom of them all could resist him : he could twist the whole spectre-world (it is not, I believe, a very intelligent world) round his little finger. There was nothing he enjoyed more than facing an obstinate and self-opinionated old ghost—a ghost of a few hundred years' standing, with a conceit to match his age—having it out with that old ghost, and reducing him to submission.

My uncle never advertised himself in any way, and had to be approached cautiously by all who desired his services. He kept his ghost-laying within the strict limits of a profession, though one not generally acknowledged or frequently followed, and refused wages, though he would take a fee. His first effort was, I believe, achieved solely to oblige a friend : afterwards a whisper of his extraordinary powers went round, and every man who had a haunted house which he could not let, every family pursued by a dogged phantom which stuck to the ancestral residence after its natural term was over, every person afflicted

by an attendant spectre, applied to my uncle for relief. He never refused it, when it was properly asked for. On receiving a summons to the practice of his profession, he packed up his traps and went off with his manservant. Sometimes it would take him weeks to remove a ghost : sometimes he would do it in half an hour. The fees he received for his services varied from a hundred pounds (he never would take less,—rather than that, he did his work for nothing) to a thousand. There was one old gentleman who had been very much bothered for many years by an irritating phantom, who was always washing his hands in his presence, and asking him for a towel—an under-bred ghost that, and one without any sense of the fitness of things ! When this old gentleman was relieved of his trouble his gratitude was so great that, besides paying the customary fee, he left in his will five thousand pounds and perpetual right in the ghost, to my uncle and his heirs for ever. *I* was my uncle's heir, but I did not know of the whole extent of his possessions when I stepped into them.

Well, my uncle died, and the secret of the ghosts, and what he had done with them, died with him. He left everything to me, and I immediately determined to have that clock put to rights. I could not do away with it, because there was a special clause in his will that it was to be left where it was, in the same room, on the same mantelpiece, facing the bed in which I intended to sleep. If I sent away that clock I forfeited my uncle's fortune : the estate and the clock went together, and were by no means, nor at any time, to be separated. However, if I could not get rid of this piece of furniture, I could make it go ; and this I resolved to do.

The first night that I slept in that particular room I had reached home late after a long journey, and, being very tired, forgot my resolution. I never had a better night's sleep in my

life. But the next morning when I awoke, the clock faced me with its fingers impudently and lyingly pointing to half-past two, when, as a matter of fact, I knew that it was just eight. I sprang out of bed and attacked that false witness. It wound up easily, and ticked regularly. Its internal organisation had evidently suffered nothing from a prolonged holiday. Throughout the whole of that day it ticked cheerfully and kept well up to time ; and as I put my head on the pillow that night, and heard it ticking industriously in the darkness, I felt that I had begun well my stewardship of the fortune left to me : the only thing which wanted doing in my uncle's house I had promptly done. Then followed the peace of a well-earned sleep.

Rats ! could it be rats making that noise ? Were there ever such impudent, ingenious, multifarious, abominable, and riotous rats as these ? I don't know how long I had been asleep, but the noise which awoke me was something distracting. I sat up in bed and listened. No, it could not be rats. Rats could not groan dismally, rats could not giggle foolishly, nor could they wail hysterically. They might run about the passages with the sound as of a hundred pattering feet, but they could not talk in confidential whispers, nor could they appeal pitifully for help, nor could they denounce one another in angry human tones.

A happy thought occurred to me. The servants were indulging in private theatricals. They had presumed on my youthful inexperience, and relied on the soundness of my slumbers : they were doubtless giving a ball or some similar entertainment to their friends in the small hours of the night. I got out of bed and made for the door. The passage beyond was in utter darkness. I thought I heard the sound of scuttling feet ; then all was still. As I groped my way towards the butler's room, some one seemed to be following me with stealthy steps. I felt for a match, which I had in my

pocket, and struck it : no one was near me, but an icy breeze rushed past me as from an open window, and my match went out. I groped my way on to the butler's door and banged at it.

"Timpkins," I said, "what is the meaning of all this?"

There was a moment's pause, and then a tremulous and husky voice answered from inside, "Is that you, sir?"

The fellow's teeth were absolutely chattering from fright : I could hear them, and the sound rejoiced me : it was well that he should feel a wholesome dread of my righteous wrath.

"Of course it's me. Open the door instantly!"

"I daren't, sir, not if it cost me my place"; and the teeth chattered audibly.

"Look here, Timpkins, you'd better not be such a fool as this. Why, man, I sha'n't slay you for it!"

"You, sir!" in an undoubted accent of astonishment, "it's not you that I'm afraid of. Oh, sir"—here the teeth chattered again—"can't you manage them better than this?"

"I'd better begin by managing you," I answered angrily ; but he did not seem to hear me.

"Not a servant will stay with you if you let it happen again! They all left before, every one of them, and they'll do it again. I only stopped because your uncle swore to me that it should occur no more, and it didn't. What he did to them, and where he put them, I can't say. But he managed them somehow. There's a noise beginning. Oh, sir, do you think they are coming again?"

"What are you talking about, fellow!—the servants?"

"The servants? Goodness gracious, no, sir! Do you think I'd let them carry on like that! It's not the least use, sir, rattling at that door, for I will *not* open it, not if I leave before breakfast to-morrow! This is not my business, sir, it's yours : you know that well enough, and I really

think you might manage it a little better." Here he shuddered till the bed shook under him.

"I'll break the door in, Timpkins, if you don't tell me what you mean. The servants must have been making that awful row, and you know it."

"Not the servants, sir," he answered in a quavering voice ; "it was the ghosts!"

The ghosts! the man was mad, or drunk. At that instant somebody certainly laughed a little mocking laugh in my ear, and I did not wait to argue the case any further. I bolted back to my room along the draughty passage, shut the door and locked it. At least there was no more noise that night. I did not sleep, but a peaceful silence prevailed, through which the clock ticked with undiminished cheerfulness.

The following morning Timpkins waited upon me at breakfast with irreproachable demeanour. When the meal was cleared away he respectfully requested permission to speak of the incidents of the night. The other servants had, he said, asked him, as the most experienced of them all in the ways of the house, to lay their grievances before me. I had not quite decided with what front it was best to face the awkward subject of the mysterious disturbance, so I just told him to go forward with what he had to say.

"Every one of them has something to complain of," he began. "There's the under-housemaid declares as a young man came and hanged himself in her room : a most unpleasant thing to happen to any respectable person, and, as the girl herself says, gentlemen should keep to their own rooms and ladies to theirs, even if they do happen to be ghosts. There's not one of them that did not see something last night. I did myself, but I'd rather not speak of it. When I hear a thing in confidence, even from a ghost, I prefer to keep it to myself."

"Do so, by all means. I am not going to believe those ridiculous

stories. I heard plenty of noise, but I saw nothing."

"I fancy, sir," he said significantly, "that would be because the ghosts don't properly know that your uncle's gone, so they dare not venture into his room. He had great control over them: I hope you'll manage to get some in time, or you'll have your house empty."

"I don't believe in the ghosts," I answered, with more irritation than truth.

"Well, sir, we all know, though it is not commonly spoken of, that your uncle was a—ahem! a ghost-collector. He went to places, and he brought 'em away with him, but what he did with 'em, and where he put 'em, nobody knew. Once or twice they broke out, and there was an awful row, but that hasn't happened for years. Last night, when the noise began, I said at once, 'They've broken loose again.' I do hope, sir, for your own sake, that you'll somehow manage to get the upper hand of them. Your uncle never gave you, I suppose, sir, a hint how to do it?"

"Never a word!"

"That's bad, but it'll happen come to you. I've spoken to the servants. They all wanted to leave this very day, but I've said to them: 'The new master's young and not experienced in the management of ghosts. Give him a fair trial, and he'll perhaps get them under, as the old master did.' They've agreed to stop for a week, and see how things go on. And I am sure, sir, you've the good wishes of us all that you may get well through with it soon." Then the respectable Timpkins departed, leaving me as much amazed and subdued in spirit as he desired the ghosts to become under my treatment. My treatment, indeed! I felt no ability left within me to cope with the rebellious phantoms who had broken loose.

Timpkins was right in his surmise, for the next night the ghosts invaded my bedroom. I awoke to find them in full possession. They seemed to be

enjoying themselves amazingly in their own eccentric manner. There was a regular crowd of them. A lady in patches and high heels was dancing a minuet on the hearth-rug. A wicked-looking man with a gray beard was depositing a skull and a few other relics of crime in a corner of the room: his manner was really amusingly secretive when you came to consider the crowded state of the apartment, but it did not amuse me at the time. A young man in a Cavalier dress was proposing in the shelter of the window-curtain to a young lady in a Puritan garb. A mad violinist was practising scales at the foot of the bed. A small boy, who produced the effect of having been deserted on the top of a mountain by a wicked uncle (I don't know how he did it in the circumstances, but ghosts have a peculiar talent for the histrionic art, and appear to be quite independent of scenic accessories), was screaming for assistance at the top of his voice. A philosopher was taking notes in my easy-chair. Last, but not least, a highwayman was explaining the details of his execution to me at one side of the bed, while a gentleman in a powdered wig, and holding a snuff-box, related to me old but not venerable Court anecdotes on the other side.

The rest of that night I decline to describe. I reasoned with those ghosts: I stormed at them, I threatened them. Then I began to throw the furniture at them, but they did not even dodge: the missiles went clean through them without damaging them in the least: I broke the looking-glass and the water-bottle, that was all. Most of the ghosts took no notice whatever of my proceedings, but remained absorbed, like lunatics, in their own. One or two paused for a moment to smile at my helpless rage, and the young lady on the hearth-rug actually giggled with amusement. Clearly these ghosts were too many for me!

The next morning at breakfast I informed Timpkins that my portmanteau must be packed at once. I was

going away for some time. He smiled a smile of satisfaction. "Very right indeed, sir, and I hope that you'll be successful and bring none of them back when you come!"

Evidently he thought that I was taking the ghosts away, whereas I was only flying from them; but I kept my own counsel, and departed by the midday train. A week's absence from home, in cheerful society and with cheerful surroundings, revived my spirits somewhat. I began to hope that the ghosts would have tired themselves out and gone: they could not always be working so hard. I would, at any rate, run down home and see what was happening there. The place looked so beautiful as I approached it—for my uncle had spared no expense in making it all that a gentleman's residence should be—that I felt quite ashamed of having been driven away from it by a set of paltry ghosts, a mere phantom collection gathered together by my own uncle, principally for his profit, but partly also for his amusement, and out of a sort of *virtuoso* curiosity. "The finest collection of spectres in the world," so he had been proud to consider them; and was I, the owner of the museum, to be afraid of my own specimens? The idea was absurd. I was received by Timpkins, whose air was preternaturally solemn.

"I'm afraid, sir, that you did not pack them as well as you thought," he remarked gravely. "Some of them must have got loose somehow, for they were at it as bad as ever the night after you left."

"Were they indeed?" I answered grimly.

"And for several nights after that," he went on. "The servants have all left. They stayed their week, and then they went. And as it happened the ghosts have been quiet ever since."

"Exactly so," I answered irritably, "I always said the servants were at the bottom of it."

He looked at me with surprise.

"You don't think so, I'm sure, sir. It's just what they call a co-hindidence!"

Coincidence or not, the ghosts let me alone that night, but I got up the next morning in a very bad temper, notwithstanding. My uncle's servants had been admirably chosen, and knew their work thoroughly. It was tiresome to lose them all at one fell swoop of fate. I should have been absolutely alone in the house but for the faithful Timpkins, who still evidently hoped that I should "manage them." He had got the gardener's wife to come and cook for me in our temporary difficulty, and I ought to have been more grateful to him than I was. I am afraid that I wanted an excuse for being savage. I found one in the clock, which had run down in my absence, and had not been attended to. I had not noticed this the night before.

"I declare, Timpkins," I remarked to that ill-used individual, "I think that my own room might at least be taken care of: I can understand that the rest of the house must be at sixes and sevens, but the place I sleep in ought to be in order!"

Timpkins, in whose experienced eye I saw compassion for my pitiable situation, expressed regret that anything had been neglected. He had not been aware of it.

"It's the clock," I answered angrily: "it has not been wound up, a thing that can be done in three minutes!"

"Oh, the clock!" responded Timpkins, his countenance clearing. "I beg pardon, sir, but the old master never allowed any one to touch it. The last housekeeper (a very valuable person, sir) was sent away because she tried to make it go. If you want that clock winding up, sir, I'll take it as a particular favour if you'll do it yourself!"

I felt inclined to quarrel with him on the spot, but on the whole decided that I wouldn't; so I wound up the clock myself. That night, as the intelligent reader will be already aware,

the ghosts came again. The intelligent reader has had the advantage of what I may call "selected circumstance" from which to draw his deductions: I was struggling with multifarious circumstances altogether unselected, which I have not put before him. Selected circumstance is what reveals to us the end of novels while the actors in them are struggling in a hopeless fog: this it is which makes us so much wiser than the philosophers, and so much sharper than the detectives, in the books we read. We are not really so clever as we think on most occasions.

Well, the ghosts came again, and I think that on the whole, they behaved rather worse than before. They talked, screamed, groaned, and proposed at the very top of their voices, and without any regard to the proprieties. They quite disturbed the philosopher at his notes, and he looked at me in a remonstrant way, as who should say, "I really do think, you know, that you let them go too far."

But what was I to do? At first I could only add my groans to theirs. After a time the sound of the clock ticking joyously on through all the noise struck me oddly. I ceased my groans to listen to it: a saving thought flashed through my mind: the coincidence existed not with the servants, but with the clock. I leaped out of bed, I rushed through those ghosts as if they had been air—very chilly air they seemed to be too—and I put my finger on the swinging pendulum. There was a low wail of deep dismay, then—oh, joy! oh, happiness! oh, relief! the ghosts were gone!

I drew my breath with a long sigh of satisfaction, and felt the solitude like a Paradise. But my troubles were not all over. The silence lasted about a minute, than I heard a slight sound, as if some one in the corner of the room was trying to speak to me. The voice was faint and uncertain: it trembled and nearly ebbed away, then took body and went on. "I—er—really must protest. I—

er—really can't consent to this. It—er—is not fair, not in the contract. You—er—have a perfect right not to wind it up, but to stop it—er—that was never agreed to."

I looked in the corner of the room and saw that the old philosopher had almost gone, but not quite; or, to speak more correctly, he had partly come back again. His form was as indistinct as his voice, it wavered like a candle in a breeze, and tried hard to keep itself together, that his limbs might not part company, like clouds before a tempest. "If you—er—would just let it go again while I talk to you," he pleaded, "the others—sha'n't—come back, and I'll tell you all—er—all about it." He nearly went out then and there, and only by a violent effort braced himself up into comparative solidity. He was a courageous old phantom.

I stood hesitating, with my finger on the clock. A wise man would have let well alone; but I was not wise. I wanted to know "all about it." I wanted to hear the secret of the clock and of the ghosts.

"You are sure they won't come back?" I asked.

"I—er—promise—honour of a gentleman. Just give me a few ticks; so hard to speak without. Ah—er—thank you—" in a clear voice of great relief, as I set the clock ticking.

Then the old gentleman began to gesticulate, and to talk violently, not to me, but to the other ghosts. Apparently they were gradually convinced by his eloquence (the details of which I could not quite catch), for it became less and less vehement; and at last the philosopher turned to me (he was now looking perfectly solid), and said with a smile, "It's all right, they have agreed to leave the negotiation in my hands. I always had great influence with them. Your uncle often consulted me on difficult affairs. Now we can sit down and talk comfortably together.

"Before I go any further in my communication," the phantom went

on, with a glance at the clock which was comfortably ticking in front of us, "I must make one bargain with you, really a very moderate one. I have a great deal of valuable information to give you, and you cannot expect to have it, even from a ghost, for nothing."

"Tell me your terms," I responded with a brevity in strong contrast to his courteous circumlocution.

"They are very simple, very simple, indeed," he said, rubbing his hands together gently, and keeping his ghostly eye on me; "just that you should undertake to wind this clock up once a year. Merely that."

"That will, as I understand," I replied, frowning, "be equal to an invitation to the—er—to your agreeable friends to come back and make as much hubbub as they like."

"For eight days only, eight days, or nights, as I should more accurately say. What are those in a whole year? I must have something in return for what I tell you. Those at any rate are my terms." He pressed his unsubstantial lips firmly together. To be brief, I consented. It was again a foolish thing to do, but I was never very wise, and my curiosity was aroused. I wanted to know about these curious people who lived somewhere on my premises. I can boast of as ancient a descent as most people, and one of my earliest ancestresses (some say the very earliest, but the point is now disputed) brought a good deal of trouble into our family by too curious a desire to know the flavour of an apple. I had inherited her curiosity. She was a very distinguished woman, and I am not going to blush for the family failing which owed its introduction to her. I consented then. The ghost sat down in my easy chair, crossed his legs, and began his story with great affability.

"Your uncle was a very admirable man, and I should not wish to say a word against him. He had unusual powers. Everybody with unusual powers has a right to exercise them at the expense of weaker creatures. That

is, I believe, an axiom of your most advanced thinkers. Having then such powers, he looked about for a subject to give them full scope, and he found—*us*. We were, each in our different spheres, pursuing our appointed tasks with great credit to ourselves and satisfaction to the community. Men respected us, women feared us: we had power, sir, and influence. There was not one of us who had not secured a comfortable situation, and was not doing his best to fulfil his duty in it. We were active then, and useful. We kept alive the past in the memory of the vulgar, who do not read and will not think: we threw out hints of the supernatural: we awakened the emotions of awe, wonder, compassion. Are not these the feelings, sir, which it was the ambition of your mighty poets in the past to inspire by their tragedies? You can all of you reverence *Æschylus*; but who is grateful to a ghost? However complaints are useless. Your uncle brought us from our various avocations, and shut us up together in a museum, like a set of mummies. What could we do there but become the trivial, miserable, deteriorated beings that we are? The dignity of our profession was gone. We could not frighten one another. We became mere puppets, and might as well have been worked by strings."

At this juncture I interrupted him. "Would you mind telling me the locality of that museum?" I asked.

"Not in the least," he answered courteously, "but it would be difficult for you to visit it, and unadvisable. Your uncle had it built on purpose for us. It is an immense underground vault, in a lonely spot in the park, after it was finished, the entrance was walled up and soil thrown over the whole, as before. There is no way in or out, except for ghosts. Your uncle did his best to make it comfortable for us. It is well furnished with secret passages, old pictures, oak-chests, bones, cupboards, curtains, and other articles for which he thought we

had a fancy. It is in fact a playground for us, but we wanted to work. Your uncle never could understand that : this was strange, because he understood it well enough for himself. We became so unhappy in that place, that at times we broke out, in spite of our respect for him, and our dread of his punishments, which were very ingenious, very ingenious indeed," added the phantom musingly, as if he remembered one or two which few men would have thought of. I wished that I could think of them.

"At last things got so bad between us, that I was appointed ambassador I said to your uncle, 'Now look here, let us talk it over as man to man. Ghosts have not many rights, but they have a few, and really, you know, you should not trample them under foot. Our feelings may seem superficial, but they exist, you ought to remember that in dealing with us'. Your uncle listened to me quite kindly, and I put the matter before him still further. 'We don't want much : a very little satisfies us. Some ghosts are content to appear only once in a hundred years or so, but I never heard of a ghost who had not his appointed day out at some time or other. It is not reasonable, it is not fair to deprive him of it. We go on practising our parts down there, and we must have some chance, just the ghost of a chance, as I may say, to appear in them before the public. There must be a possibility of it to keep our minds easy. You ought to allow us that'. 'Very well', said your uncle, 'I'll drive a bargain with you. Will you undertake that it shall be kept by all the others as well as yourself?' I answered that I was appointed to speak for the rest. 'Then', said your uncle, 'I offer you this. You are free to come out and enjoy yourselves as you like, whenever that clock on my mantel-piece is going, *but at no other time*. That was the main feature of the compact we made : there were other small conditions, as that the clock was not to be removed from its place, or wilfully damaged in any

way ; the room was not to be kept locked up ; no one except himself was to know the secret concerning it. These conditions I insisted upon, to give us a real chance of an occasional holiday, and your uncle agreed to them ; but, would you believe it, sir ", the phantom concluded with a deep sigh, "your uncle had such power of will that never, by any accident, was the clock wound up from that day until the hour of his death".

"And now," I responded gloomily, "I have actually undertaken to wind it up once a year".

"You have received a great deal of information in return", said the ghost cheerfully.

"Which will never be of the slightest use to me", I answered sadly, for the apple was eaten, and the family troubles were before me.

"I wish", I remarked to the philosopher, "that you could induce your friends to behave with a little more moderation when they come to see me next".

"I will use all my influence in that direction", he answered, with a polite bow of farewell. The dawn was breaking, and, like a puff of cold wind, he went past me to his subterranean dwelling.

I next had an interview with Timpkins, and tried to put the situation before him cheerfully. We engaged new servants, who were to arrive in eight days, and for the next few nights we put up with the ghosts as well as we could. Timpkins stood by me manfully during the period, and when the clock had run down, peace prevailed.

The year that followed was a pleasant one. Nobody meddled with the clock, and the ghosts practised their parts silently underground. I liked my uncle's house, and I enjoyed the use of his fortune. I almost forgot at times that it included a collection of phantoms. But the months went on, and the season came when I was obliged to face my difficulties. I dismissed my servants for ten days' holi-

day, and shut up all the house except my own rooms. I engaged Timpkins to remain with me during the awful week, for a fee of a hundred guineas: this money was to buy his silence also.

"I am afraid, Timpkins", I said sadly, "that we may expect the ghosts again. I am obliged—er—to have a little talk with them".

"That's a pity, sir", said Timpkins, with an air of gloom. "It isn't well to give too many liberties to them creatures. The old master never did it, and it isn't good for 'em, gives them notions, and puts them up to mischief".

"It won't happen often", I answered, apologetically, "only once a year".

"Once a year! Indeed, sir! That's very bad!" said Timpkins severely. He departed then, and I was left alone with the clock.

I took the key in my fingers, and I looked at the innocent timepiece with hatred. Something very like murder was in my heart. Should I dash it to my feet in a thousand fragments? Such was certainly my inclination, but I doubted the wisdom of indulging it. The ghosts would regard such an act of violence as a destruction of their agreement with my uncle, and would swarm all over the premises at once and for ever. At present they seemed to have the impression (foolish creatures!) that I had the power of keeping them to their treaty as my uncle would have done, and of enforcing penalties for breach of contract. It was as well that they should remain in this delusion: I had no wish to destroy it by any rude shock, nor to enlighten them as to the real depths of my weakness and the poverty of my resources. No, I would do no act of violence: I would keep my word

with the phantom philosopher and wind up the clock; therefore I began my task with self-control and outward calmness. But the works were rusty: the damp had got into the inner chimney-wall during the recent rains, and had damaged the clock. Still I persisted in my conscientious efforts to turn the key: still the clock resisted. Then suddenly there was a crack and a whirr, and the key turned round with the greatest ease, for the mainspring was broken.

I sank down in the easy-chair and rang the bell for the butler, who came running in alarm.

"Timpkins", I said incoherently, "you can send for the servants as soon as you like. It's all right: they'll never come again".

Timpkins looked at the open clock-face, and at the key in my hand.

"I understand, sir", he remarked with significance; "I was always sure that had something to do with it. *You've broken the clock!*" Evidently he approved of my action: perhaps he thought I had done it on purpose. I did not undeceive him. It was to the ghosts, and not to him, that I was answerable.

We sent for the servants to return to their duties at once. I telegraphed invitations to some of my friends to come and have a jolly week with me; and a jolly week we had. I never felt so happy in my life, nor so free. Now I can keep my compact with the phantom without fear. I shall turn the key round next Christmas with a light heart, for nothing will follow. And the ghosts have no right to complain, for the thing happened entirely by accident. But I shall not have the clock mended: that was not in the contract.

## SOME DISTANT PROSPECTS OF ETON COLLEGE.

"WHEN we desire to recall what befell us in the earliest period of youth, it often happens that we confound what we have heard from others with that which we really possess from our own direct experience". So wrote Goethe, and straightway proceeded to justify himself in his own autobiography. This confusion adds one more to the many doubts which already perplex the too conscientious student of history. The writer who draws on the treasures of his own memory is rarely able, even when most willing, to distinguish between Truth and Poetry. Inextricably confounded in his own mind, the two beautiful shadows gain no firmness of outline in their passage to the minds of others. For our own part, we would not have it otherwise. A mighty Father of the Church has branded Poetry as "the wine of demons." "Tis a wine we love. It gladdeneth the heart, and leaveth no headache on the morrow. For we frankly own ourselves to be of that feeble band, of whom Bacon says: "Doth any man doubt that, if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?"

Many and famous are the instances of this morganatic alliance between Truth and Poetry: none perhaps more famous than the heroic delusion nourished by George the Fourth, that he had led the charge of English cavalry which broke the French line at Waterloo. In one of the books to which we owe these distant prospects of Eton there is another and, if less

magnificent, not less remarkable instance.<sup>1</sup> The reverend chronicler shall tell it in his own words:

"When Stapylton a few years ago inserted the names of all the elevens at the beginning of his famed 'Eton List,' he received a letter one morning from India from this noted judge of the High Court, who begged to call attention to some mistakes in the list of '32—one or two he had inserted who were not in the eleven. Wilkinson, of course, he knew, and in connection with him, he remembered going to a dance at his house in the evening, but the omission he had to complain of was his own name! Stapylton sent the judge's letter on to my eldest brother, asking if he could explain matters. My brother replied that he had forwarded it to me, as the right man to correct any mistake. I returned it with the answer that the 'judge never played in our eleven at all!' There was an hallucination! It was, I suppose, like the old story of the Prince Regent about the battle of Waterloo. He had recounted this event so often, that at last he fancied and asserted he was present himself! I suppose the judge had the same feeling; but one curious point still connected with the story was that in the year '32, when it was fully impressed on his mind that he played, we beat Harrow by one innings and one hundred and fifty-six runs, but in the year 1833, when he really did play, Harrow beat Eton by eight wickets!"

Mr. Wilkinson, conscious of this sweet confusion, is careful not to assume too much infallibility for his own memory. Indeed, so careful is he that once his caution takes a most baffling form, when, after harrowing our feelings on one page by the story of a poor little lad who was drowned while bathing in an ominous pool known as Deadman's Hole, on the next he relieves them by recounting the recovery and restoration of the corpse, and its graphic narrative of its sensations. Yet even he, with all his care, does lose his way now and

<sup>1</sup> Reminiscences of Eton (Keate's Time): by the Rev. C. Allix Wilkinson. London: 1888.

then in these fairy paths. He has, for example, got it into his head that Mr. Maxwell Lyte<sup>1</sup> was not fostered in that holy shade which sheltered his own youth. Mr. Lyte's book, from which he quotes not a little, he allows to be no bad thing for one who had no personal knowledge of the school—a reservation which he is also obliged to apply to the entertaining pages of *Etoniana*. This warning he impresses on his readers not once but many times, with a complacency almost bordering on the Pharisaical. Yet, though it is true that the author of *Etoniana* was not an Etonian, those school-lists which Mr. Wilkinson so often quotes might have shown him his mistake in the case of Mr. Lyte—to say nothing of the dedication of that gentleman's history, *Etonensibus Etonensis*. He can construe that; for he claims, and claims with perfect reason, that though the course of Latin and Greek learning was in his day narrow, yet what was learned therein was learned well. His own language was, he complains, sadly neglected; and we fear that he has shown some reason also for this complaint,—or at least suffered his printers to show reason. His pages swarm with errors innumerable,—errors, it must be added, not English only. What manner of language and verse is this?

“Carmina quantar vogas, carmina tanta dedi.”  
He should have recollect that his young readers will not, like us poor sons of Grub Street, grown wise with bitter experience, be able always to detect the fine Roman hand of the printer, and will credit him with the quaint devices of diction, spelling, and so forth, which unconsciously adorn his tale, and may indeed be thought also to point his moral. And there is another matter on which he is not unlikely to get still shorter shrift. As becomes one who has worn the light blue cap both at Eton and Cambridge, and played in his day for the Gentle-

men of England, Mr. Wilkinson has much to say about cricket. In his admiration for that noble game and the many fine lessons it teaches, we most cordially join; but we will take the liberty of pointing out to him that, when he mentions Mr. Buxton, of Harrow and Cambridge fame, as a bowler against whom no batsman of this timorous day, even in full panoply of pads and gloves, will dare to stand, he may be writing very good Poetry, but he is certainly writing very bad Truth. Has the good gentleman ever seen Mr. Buxton bowl? Most straight in virtue he may be, but he is one of the mildest-mannered bowlers with whom a rude batsman ever took liberties. Nor has even Barnes won his fame by the particular swiftness of his deliveries. Mr. Wilkinson's young critics are not unlikely to stare, and possibly to do something more than gasp, when they find an old captain of the Eton Eleven thus tripping. However, it is not at all our purpose to cavil at Mr. Wilkinson, but rather in all good fellowship to wander back with him a while into that old world whose life he so entertainingly recalls, and among whose heroes he was not the least. Nor shall we concern ourselves to ask where Truth ends and Poetry begins. We are all mortal, Etonians and others; and we have no doubt that we ourselves, who write these lines, have given, and shall always give, to the figures which shine on us through those sunset mists proportions more heroical and colours more enchanting than they ever wore in the clear light of dawn.

Eton under the rule of Keate must, when all allowances are made, have been a lively place. Every one knows—for every one has read *Eôthen*—Mr. Kinglake's famous description of the great little man: “He was very little more, if more at all, than five feet in height; and was not very great in girth, but within this space was concentrated the pluck of ten battalions.” Ten battalions, even with a

<sup>1</sup> Author of *A History of Eton College* (1875) and *A History of the University of Oxford* (1886).

magistrate added to read the Riot Act, would hardly suffice in these degenerate days to keep in order such an unruly host of boys. Yet we doubt whether Keate was really such an Orbilius as popular tradition has made him. "Flogging", says our chronicler—who however insists on his old head-master's essential kindness, of which, knowing him, as boys say, "at home", he had ample opportunities to judge—"Flogging was the head and front, or perhaps I may say, the head and tail, of the system in Keate's time". And indeed, if half one hears and reads be true, John Keate might almost stand for that primitive Aryan Man who has lately been discovered under the shadow of the Birch. Mr. Wilkinson gives a most ludicrous instance of the force of the ruling passion.

"'Don't answer me, sir, I'll flog you directly', was—it may be said—a stereotyped phrase in our head-master's book for twenty-seven years of his life, and even after this it sometimes cropped up. I remember some years afterwards, when I was his curate, I was blowing up one of my Hampshire bumpkins after church for some irregularity or misbehaviour. The boy stood with his mouth open and hat on his head, and was just beginning to make some excuse, when my old rector strutted up, sturdy still in his gait and full of apparent ire, which he always put on in his old communication with the boys at Eton, and probably fancying himself there, with the never-failing umbrella in his hand he poked off the village boy's hat as he said: 'What's this, sir? Don't answer me, sir, take off your hat, sir, I'll flog you directly'''.

Yet it is possible that these stern resolutions were not always fulfilled to the very letter. Among our acquaintances we have the honour to number a very distinguished pupil of Keate, and a contemporary of Mr. Wilkinson to boot; and he always deprecates the idea that his old chief was (as Pope, to be sure, says are all chiefs) nothing but a rod. He may be at fault, of course, as well as others; but we suspect that the memorable occasion when Keate crushed a general rebellion in the bud by flogging the entire Lower Fifth in batches all through a sum-

mer's night, took such hold of the popular fancy that it has come to be commonly assumed that education as well as discipline was invariably administered in this fashion by the fiery little Doctor. And there can be no doubt that if Keate's reputation has unjustly suffered, he was his own worst detractor. "Manners maketh Man", is the well-known motto of a famous College; "and the want of them, I suppose, the Fellow", was, or is said to have been (of course in ancient times), the comment on a certain member of that august body to whom learning had not given its wonted polish. Keate's manners to his boys were evidently, to say the least, not conciliatory; and the effect was the greater from its contrast with the somewhat playful indulgence of his predecessor, Goodall. Even those who suffered most from them never in after-time doubted the righteousness of his summary dealings with all opposition to his authority; but somehow he had an unlucky knack of doing right in the wrong way. One of his pupils, cordially granting him "the pluck of ten battalions," significantly adds, "but he was always parading his battalions." It was his general bearing and language, as much as any direct interference with their privileges or pleasures, that stirred the boys against him. He was an utter infidel, we are told, as to the existence of chivalry in boys. It is, of course, difficult on this point to distinguish between cause and effect, but there can be little doubt that his own experience of them admitted no other belief. Mr. L'Estrange, an Etonian of a later generation, thinks that Dr. Hawtrey's urbanity, and especially his confidence in the boys, tended to cultivate a gentlemanly spirit, of which, however, he does not seem able to recall many proofs.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wilkinson, on the other hand, opines, in his own playful style, that "poor Hawtrey, with all his good intentions and over-

<sup>1</sup> *Vert de Vert's Eton Days, &c.*; by Rev. A. G. L'Estrange. London: 1887.

politeness to the boys, was far more humbugged than old Keate with his sharpness and unmitigated bluster<sup>2</sup>. And, indeed, we suspect that in the large majority of cases the most cogent appeal to a boy's honour is made through that portion of his frame where honour is popularly, and somewhat quaintly, held to have fixed her seat. Nor does this suspicion cast any slur on our young barbarians. Among themselves the tables of their law are held sacred, and the unlucky wight who violates them gets but short shrift. But the laws that are made for them, without their sanction or consideration, are quite another matter. They are kept, or broken, in proportion to the power of the authorities to maintain them. Some boys, of course, there will always be in every school on whom the *mitis sapientia*, the understanding kindness of such a nature, for example, as Dr. Balston's, works wonders. But they will always be the exceptions, and must always be, while human nature remains human. Less rare exceptions now, perhaps, than formerly. The times change, and manners, if not men, change with them. A wider range of studies, added to an improved dietary and sanitary system, may have at once expanded and softened the nature of our boys. How this may be, we can but say with the poet,

"We know not, and we speak of what has been."

It is at any rate certain that, whether he found or made them so, the boys whom Keate ruled were a wild and mutinous lot. That there was any real bad blood between master and boys, we do not believe. Despot as he was, Keate was not really unpopular. A lad, smarting from those Roman rods, bore doubtless, like Boadicea, an indignant mien, and took strange counsel with his fellow-sufferers. But though the hand which chastened them so sorely may not perhaps have been greatly loved, it was certainly respected. After Keate had laid down

the ferule he often revisited Eton; and on one Fourth of June, when the well-known face was seen looking down on the boats in Boveney Lock, the crews stood up and cheered their old master with a will. There is nothing boys admire so much as the strong man. It was a fair trial of strength between them and Keate; and Keate won. Whatever else he was, or was not, there can be no shadow of doubt that he proved himself master. Like all great men, moreover—and among school-masters who shall deny John Keate the name of Great!—he could be merciful in his strength. Not many in his position would, we think, have foreborne as he forebore when a boy threw a large stone at him in the middle of school. Had the offender been expelled straightway, no one could have protested. Had he been flogged with the utmost power of that terrible right arm, he would have been most righteously served. But all Keate did was to rise from his seat and say, "I require to know who the individual was who threw that stone"; and when the boy answered, "It was I did it, sir, and I beg your pardon", the Doctor forgave him on the spot.

We have heard of—nay, to be frank, we have ourselves assisted at the conveyance of rats, frogs, and such small deer into the school-room of an offending master; but a stone surpasses the legitimate expression of popular feeling. It was a brutal act, and characteristic of a time which, with many fine and noble qualities, was undeniably in some ways brutal. Fighting, for example, was often encouraged to a cruel pitch among lads too young for such rough work. They fought stripped to the waist, with their seconds and bottle-holders, in strict imitation of the professional Ring. It needed the death of poor young Ashley to curb within reasonable bounds a necessary and wholesome mode of arbitration which no wise man would ever wish to see fall into dishonour among schoolboys. Sir Francis Doyle has told us in his *Reminiscences* what Keate's views

were on fighting, and in what gallant style he expressed them on this sad occasion. "It is not", he said to the upper boys, "that I object to fighting in itself. On the contrary, I like to see a boy who receives a blow return it at once; but that you, the heads of the school, should allow a contest to go on for two hours and a half, has shocked and grieved me".

Mr. Wilkinson tells of a famous fight in his time, when one of the combatants, disdaining his second's knee, strutted about between the rounds spouting Homer,—an epic display also attributed to Shelley in his memorable battle some twenty years earlier. And earlier still of course was the yet more memorable set-to between Arthur Wellesley and "Bobus" Smith. The latter, who was much the bigger boy, was well thrashed, and the sting of this defeat never left him till Waterloo had been won. Then he used to say he thought it no shame to have been beaten by the man who had beaten Buonaparte. Fighting has probably gone out of fashion now with young England at Eton as elsewhere. The boy, of course, imitates the man; and when the elders no longer thought it necessary to answer every hot word, or settle every mere difference of opinion with a pair of pistols, the youngsters naturally began to realise that a pair of fists was not the only guardian of one's honour. Naturally also the blood runs cooler in the age of Apollinaris than it ran in the age of Beer. Those who were at Eton in the early Sixties will doubtless recall a famous bout at the Fives Courts one afternoon between two young Trojans of the Fifth Form; and about a decade later there was a more formal affair in a field off the Datchet road, wherein one of the combatants proved himself a worthy descendant of "the Last of the English." But for the most part this practical illustration of the *argumentum ad hominem* is now confined, we suspect, to the lower boys, and is possibly not rampant among them. Nor does this prove any de-

cadence of spirit. So long as a boy is ready to fight when he must, there is no need to lament that the occasions for fighting are rare.

But it was not only in the playing-fields that the life of those days was rough. The domestic and dietary arrangements did not go beyond the necessities of existence, and in these well-ordered days will hardly be thought to have included them. Boys were not then supposed to have entered on our common heritage of fleshly ills: cold, pain, and labour were unknown quantities. Overcoats and umbrellas, even in the bitterest and rainiest winters, were a scandal in the eyes of the sturdy little Doctor. "Wet, sir!" he would say to any boy who ventured to plead that he had feelings like others. "Cold, sir! Don't talk to me of weather, sir. You must make the best of it: you're not at a girls' school." To be sure he occasionally enveloped his own diminutive form in a long dark-blue cloak of military cut, and always, in sunshine and in rain, carried an umbrella; but this he seems to have regarded more as a weapon of offence, and defence, than as a protection against the weather. Comforts were scorned: luxuries depended on pocket-money, and, when that was forthcoming, seem to have taken the form rather of barbaric profusion than delicacy. According to Mr. Wilkinson, when a boy entertained his friends at breakfast, a dish of twelve sausages was considered the proper portion of each guest, besides devilled kidneys, eggs, jam, and other such pretty little tiny kickshaws. Boys have always, and rightly, been famous for their appetites. We have ourselves seen three mutton-chops and a pint and a half of stout make their way down one young throat at breakfast—but that was after an early run with the beagles; and the evidence at a once notorious trial proved how many poached eggs could be consumed at a sitting. But all such feats are but as the meal of the fair Aminé before the exploits of Keate's young Gar-

gantus. Life among the Collegers was especially hard. Mr. Wilkinson (who, like Hallam, Milman, and many another good man before him, was not elected on the Foundation till he passed some time as an Oppidan) adds his testimony to the hardships endured by the tenants of Long Chamber. Indeed, till Provost Hodgson carried his famous reforms, the existence of the King's Scholars was little short of a disgrace to any civilised community ; and there is no doubt that the knowledge of this, added to other causes which have now also disappeared, greatly increased the contempt in which the Oppidans for a long while held their gown-wearing comrades.

But by far the gravest offence of those days lay in Chapel, and in the general laxity of the regard paid to affairs of religion. Merely as a matter of discipline the boys' behaviour in Chapel must have been a gross outrage on decency ; and it does not seem that those with whom these matters rested did much by their own example or teaching to inculcate a higher and more serious tone. There are two stories of this time, both told by Mr. Lyte, which, though probably apocryphal, are in their way characteristic of the levity we speak of. One describes the misadventure of a batch of candidates for confirmation whose names were by accident sent up to the Head-master on a slip of paper identical in size and shape with the "bill" used for reporting delinquents. Keate flogged them all, being the more angry with them for attempting to escape on a plea which he thought irreverent as well as false. The other gives the Doctor's own comment on the sixth Beatitude :—"Blessed are the pure in heart.' Mind that : it's your duty to be pure in heart. If you are not pure in heart, I'll flog you." But this is one of the distant prospects on which none would wish to linger. Nor does it seem to have been peculiar to Eton. In another book wherein the spirits of the writer's school-time are called from the vasty deep of memory, things

seem to have been little better at Winchester.<sup>1</sup> But those days are gone ; and here at least all will echo Will Waterpoof's words, "With time I do not quarrel."

In reading these old recollections the marvel of it all is how mightily the boys flourished, and, strangest part of all, flourished intellectually as well as physically. One can understand how the hard life Mr. Wilkinson recounts bred a hard race : one can understand the Duke of Wellington's saying (an article of historic faith, of course, among all Etonians) that the battle of Waterloo was won in the playing-fields of Eton. Mr. Wilkinson is possibly only soaring into a fine careless rapture when he ascribes the wonderful escape of an Etonian at Inkerman to the skill with rifle, revolver and broadsword that he had brought with him from school, where, even in those fighting days, such courses of education were, we opine, not commonly pursued. But the school-life of our fathers was no doubt well framed to turn out a sturdy race well able to take care of themselves in any mortal chance. How they came to do so well in the affairs of the mind is not so intelligible. Keate was a first-rate Latin scholar, though his skill in Greek was perhaps not quite so certain (first-rate Grecians were rarer then than now), and he had some good scholars under him. But when one reads of the tumultuous and haphazard manner in which the hours of school were passed, and of the extraordinary disproportion of masters to boys, it is a marvel how well Eton held her own in those days at the Universities. "I have," writes Mr. Wilkinson,

"the Eton list of 1826 before me, and I see that, though there was a head-master and two assistants for the lower school, which consisted of thirty-seven boys, the actual head-master of the upper school had only seven assistants for the instruction of the whole number, which consisted of five hundred and fifteen boys, one

<sup>1</sup> What I Remember ; by Thomas Adolphus Trollope. In two volumes : London, 1887. See vol. i. ch. vi.

hundred and sixteen of whom—that is, the sixth form and all the upper division—were up to Keate at the top of the upper school, and the whole remove, upper and lower, with one hundred and fourteen boys, were up to one master in the 'lobby,' which, I should think, could not have held above eighty or ninety at most, packed almost like herrings in a barrel."

And then he goes on to narrate the high-jinks which naturally went on in such a mob, and must have made Upper School a regular pandemonium. Yet the fact remains indisputable that, despite the onset led by The Edinburgh Review at the close of Keate's reign, his best boys had no cause to blush when matched at the Universities with those from other schools, even with those who had sat at the feet of the great Dr. Butler of Shrewsbury. The immense list Mr. Wilkinson has compiled of Etonians who were afterwards conspicuous in the conduct of English affairs, at home and abroad, is not perhaps much to the point. Eton was then, as it has always been, pre-eminently the school of the aristocracy; and in those old days, when competitive examinations for all things under heaven were unknown, the high places of the realm were mostly filled by members of aristocratic families, and not, we venture to think, so badly filled as it pleases a democracy to think. But in the pages both of *Etoniana* and Mr. Lyte's book there is ample proof that in some way, which it is certainly now hard to understand, Keate did turn out some very good scholars; or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, boys who only wanted the ampler and serener air of the Universities to become very good scholars. Of course, generally speaking, scholarship was not fifty or sixty years ago the exact thing it has since become. The classics were studied rather on their literary than their philological side, and were not possibly less understood and valued on that account. But the true reason lies in this fact: the Eton boys of those days, if they learned but little, learned that little well. Homer, Horace, and Virgil formed the basis of their classical

education; and if a boy went regularly up the school, and passed his last year or two under Keate's own eye, it was his own fault if he did not come to know the best part of those three authors almost literally by heart; for the "saying-lessons" were long and frequent then, and the mere mechanical exercise of learning every day so many lines of verse, whether they be Greek, Latin, or English, is one of the very best mental disciplines possible. And it will, we think, be generally allowed that a boy who knows Homer, Horace, and Virgil as thoroughly perhaps as it is possible for a boy to know them, starts with every chance of becoming a good classical scholar. The system is now changed. Changes come now so thick and fast that one might fancy our puzzled lads asking, with the melancholy poet,

" But we, brought forth and reared in hours  
Of change, alarm, surprise—  
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?  
What leisure to grow wise?"

It is thought better for a boy to know very many things imperfectly than to know one or two things well. Perhaps in these days it is better for the boy, commercially speaking; just as in these days the best education for a girl is considered to be that which enables her to chatter glibly (guileless of all Greek) about the immortal truths of Plato, and to hold views, more startling than orthodox, on leprosy and the law of population. The pastors and masters of the young generation may be presumed to know their own business best: at any rate it certainly is not ours to teach it to them; but what came out of that old, wild, narrow, routine-fed Eton, does seem to suggest that they were not wholly astray who kept to the Greek maxim, "Give us a good thing two or three times over."

We have lingered so long among the more serious reflections that these old-world memories have suggested, that we have but little time or space

left us for the lighter ones. Mr. Wilkinson's book supplies these more copiously than Mr. L'Estrange's. The latter however tells a story of Dr. Hawtrey, which shows that, for all his politeness and urbanity to the boys, he had a pretty wit and could exercise it on occasion. He was flogging ("swishing" is the canonical term at Eton) a little fellow for playing cards, and the victim did not take the punishment stolidly. "Play *whist*, will you?" said the Doctor (swish). "Odd tricks, indeed!" (swish). "Oh, yes—all right—you shuffle, and I'll cut." A still more bitter joke was told (slanderously, no doubt) of the Doctor in our time, perpetrated at the expense of a lad who was expiating a visit to Ascot races; but the form, the verbal form, that joke took must be left to the imagination. Keate's divine wrath was sometimes also pointed with a jest, though, as may be guessed, its humour was mostly very grim. A luckless lad in his division construed a famous passage in Horace thus: "*Exegi, I have eaten, monumentum, a monument, perennius, harder, are, than brass.*" "Oh, you have, have you," said the Doctor. "Then you'll stay afterwards, and I'll give you something that will help you to digest it." But perhaps one of the most amusing samples of scholastic irony, and the cruellest, was one which came under our own notice. A certain boy, in construing Greek Testament (in those days always taken at the first school on Monday morning, and a bitter winter's morning, we well remember, this was) came upon a word to which our old English translators gave, as their good custom was, an old English equivalent. The boy, after hesitating a while, substituted a modern and polite circumlocution. "My little friend," said the master, "is that modesty, or is it ignorance? For if it is ignorance, you will write out and translate your lesson." "Oh, no, sir," was the natural answer: "it is not ignorance." "Ah, I see: modesty. Then you will write out and translate it twice."

But the boys had their turn sometimes. Mr. Lyte gives one particularly happy specimen of their wit, which we sincerely trust was pardoned for its happiness. It was permitted in the old days to decorate the margins of our maps with such devices as our fancy suggested and our skill could accomplish. An artistic young pupil of Keate produced a map of the Mediterranean containing an eight-oar, manned by the masters and steered by the Doctor himself; and doubtful, possibly, of his skill in portraiture he labelled the boat with this line:

"*Gens inimica mihi Tyrrhenum navigat aequor.*"

Mr. Wilkinson indulges in none of the melancholy forebodings which sadden Mr. L'Estrange's retrospection. His well-loved school is, he thinks, as good and pleasant a place as ever it was, even in some ways a better one. This is the proper spirit for such a book. Indeed, though his style is not, as we have already hinted, conspicuous for its literary distinction, his tone is on the whole manly and sensible. He does not write his trifles with dignity; but he writes them with cheerfulness and amiability. We are surprised, therefore, to find him falling into a certain piece of foolishness. He is glad, he says, to learn that the custom of giving boys their titles at Absence has been abandoned. We trust that he will, on reflection, be equally glad to hear that it has not been abandoned. As a mere matter of common-sense, we can see no reason why Lord Tomnoddy should be treated with less courtesy than Smith *major*. We should, indeed, be extremely sorry to think that Eton had made any concession to the detestable cant which the desire for such a change implies. Affectation is the hall-mark of a snob; and there is no affectation at once so odious and so ridiculous as that which makes a virtue of ignorant distinctions which always have existed and always must exist in every stable society. The boys may be trusted to keep these matters right

among themselves. Despite her aristocratic atmosphere and traditions no great school has kept herself more free from any taint of snobbishness than Eton ; nor is there any school in which a lad with such notions in his head is likely to get them more quickly drummed out of it. It will not be the boys' fault if Eton suffers a change in this respect. Indeed, from the days when Charles Fox was as soundly flogged by his master as he was soundly quizzed by his comrades for the airs he gave himself after a holiday passed among the fine lords and ladies of Paris, Eton boys have ever been most nobly intolerant of all assumptions of superiority ; while, like all true boys, they have been most lavish in their worship of the only distinctions they acknowledge—the distinctions of good-fellowship and physical prowess. It is indeed this happy mixture—the aristocratic frame enclosing the best spirit of a true democracy, in which every man may, if he can, prove himself as good as his neighbour,—which has helped to give Eton her high place among schools. When this true democracy is changed for that false one which refuses to recognize the truth of the witty saying that all men are born unequal, then may Eton change her motto, for then she will no longer flourish. Changes there have been : changes are doubtless still to come ; but this change let all her sons hope she will never see.

And some of them, too, will hope

that the hand of this reforming age will not fall too heavily on the beautiful place. There is so much false sentiment about in these days that one is loth to use a word so often and so sadly abused. But not false is the sentiment which hallows old buildings and scenes, beautiful to all eyes, and thrice beautiful in their traditions to the eyes which have learned to see among them. Such a feeling counts for much in shaping the power and the charm of such schools as Winchester and Westminster and Eton. Changes of internal economy, changes of scholastic discipline must needs come as the thoughts and wants of men are widened with the process of years. But it must surely be possible to effect these necessary changes without doing wanton violence to those venerable landmarks which make such a place as Eton an object of wholesome pride and affection to all Englishmen. It can be no false or foolish sentiment which prays those whose high privilege it is now, and may hereafter be, to sway the destinies of this great school, so far to keep her beauty undimmed, and her memories green, as the inevitable shocks of time and man's needs will suffer.

“ Pro Latio obtester, pro majestate tuorum

Ne vetus indigenas nomen mutare Latinos,  
Neu Troas fieri jubeas Teucrosque vocari,  
Aut vocem mutare viros aut vertere vestem.  
Sit Latium, sint Albani per secula reges,  
Sit Romana potens Itala virtute propago.”

## SACHARISSA'S LETTERS.

THE fair Sacharissa, whose perfections of mind and person are celebrated in Waller's immortal verse, was, like many ladies of her time, a charming letter-writer. Every one was eager to have one of those letters sparkling with wit and brightness which flowed so easily from what a contemporary calls "the most eloquent pen in England." Unfortunately very little of Lady Dorothy's correspondence during her early years has been preserved, and only two of her letters have been discovered in the vast collection of Sidney papers at Penshurst. These are brief and formal notes addressed to her father, Lord Leicester, during his absence as Ambassador at the Court of Versailles, and do little more than express the dutiful sentiments which a well-brought-up daughter might be expected to entertain for her parents. Both were written from Penshurst in 1638, at a time when Dorothy's charms had already attracted more than one suitor, and when Lady Leicester was anxiously seeking an eligible husband to whom she might safely trust her "deare Doll's" future.

The records of the brief period of her married life are just as barren. Two or three of Lord Sunderland's letters remain to give us a glimpse of their happy home at Althorpe and the tenderness of their mutual affection; but not one of those letters "from his dearest hart" which the young Earl expected so eagerly in camp and court, has ever come to light.

After her husband's death the following letter, pleading for the wardship of her infant son, was addressed by Lady Sunderland to the King, through her father.

"**MY LORD**,—The afflictions of my spirit and the weakness of my body will scarce suffer

me to write; but the consideration I have of my poor orphans makes me force myself to desire your lordship that you will be pleased in my behalf to beseech his Majesty to join your lordship of my son, for except I receive your care and assistance in this business, I cannot hope to live or die with any satisfaction in what concerns my children's fortune. They are nearest to your lordship if I should fall, and I cannot rely with confidence on any but yourself. What the king has graciously promised I cannot doubt, and therefore I make no request for that which I conceive is already given; but I hear that some of my dear lord's kindred have endeavoured to injure me, which I did as little expect as I do now apprehend anything which may contradict a declaration of his Majesty's justice to one who am by this loss the unhappiest of all creatures. The wardship will be of so little value for some years, as, were I not full of affection for my son, I should not wish the trouble which I believe this business will bring to me. I would have written to the king myself, but the distempers I am in have so dulled the little sense I had, as I dare not say anything to his Majesty. Wherefore I do again beseech your lordship to present my request with that humility which becomes me, and if it be possible for me to take any comfort in this world, it will be in knowing that my son shall remain in your lordship's care, if it should please God to take me from him. I have written with much pain and yet I must add to it a protestation of being so long as I breathe, with all sincerity of heart, your lordship's most humble, obedient daughter,

"**D. SUNDERLAND.**"

A few days after this letter was written, Lady Sunderland gave birth to another child, a son, who received his father's name and became the pet and delight of the family at Penshurst. He only lived five years; and his grandfather, Lord Leicester, alludes touchingly to his death in the following entry of his journal. "Wednesday, March 14, 1649.—The sweet little boy, Harry Spencer, my grandchild, five years old from October last, dyed at Leicester House."

Lady Sunderland and her mother were both in town at the time, and also her Aunt Lucy, Lady Carlisle,

who, we learn from Lord Leicester's journal, was arrested the very next day and committed to the Tower, on charge of being implicated in Lord Holland's plot. Lord Leicester himself had retired to Penshurst on his dismissal from the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by the King in 1644, and his estates had been saved from sequestration by the influence of his brother-in-law, Lord Northumberland, as well as of his two sons, Philip, Lord Lisle, and Algernon, both of whom had early embraced the Parliamentary cause. They were even members of the Commission appointed to try the King in January, 1648, but were neither of them present at the trial. "My two sons, Philip and Algernon," says Lord Leicester in his diary, "came unexpectedly to Penshurst, Monday 22nd, and stayed there till Monday, 29th January, so neither of them was at the condemnation of the King."

In the following June the Princess Elizabeth and the young Duke of Gloucester were committed by Lord Northumberland to the care of his sister, Lady Leicester, at Penshurst, with the express stipulation that their titles must be dropped, and they should eat the same food and sit at the same table as the children of the family. The royal children, however, were treated with the greatest kindness as long as they remained at Penshurst; and when the young Princess Elizabeth died the next year, she left a diamond necklace to Lady Leicester in token of her gratitude, and other "little things to my Lady Sunderland."

Dorothy remained at Penshurst with her children and with her parents till the summer of 1650, and was present that August at the marriage of her youngest sister Isabella to her cousin, Lord Strangford, a union to which Lord Leicester consented reluctantly, "disliking the marriages of so near persons," but being much pressed by his wife and family. The result justified his worst fears, for the young man proved a spendthrift and rake, and repaid his brother-in-law Algernon

Sidney's good advice and generous help with the basest ingratitude.

A month after this ill-omened wedding, Dorothy left Penshurst for London, and, in Lord Leicester's words, "went to dwell by herself at Althorpe," where during the next two years she devoted herself to the education of her children and the management of her son's estates. This son, Robert, was a boy of extraordinary promise, and his quickness and aptitude for learning excited the wonder of his tutor, Dr. Thomas Pierce, a Fellow of Lord Sunderland's old college, Magdalen, who had been ejected from Oxford by the Parliamentary Commissioners, and who afterwards became Rector of Brington.

Lady Sunderland's acts of kindness to the distressed clergy in her neighbourhood made her generally beloved at this time; and Lloyd, in his *Memoirs of Loyalists*, says of her: "She is not to be mentioned without the highest honour in this catalogue of sufferers, to many of whom her house was a sanctuary, her interest a protection, her estate a maintenance, and the livings in her gift a preference." During her residence at Althorpe, Lady Sunderland planned the great double staircase, still the chief feature of the house, which excited the admiration of the Grand Duke Cosmo of Tuscany on his visit to Althorpe in 1669.

Meanwhile domestic troubles and losses fell heavily on Dorothy's parents. Their two younger daughters, Frances, "a very good, modest, discreet, and sweet-natured creature," and Elizabeth, whom her sorrowing father describes as having "the most angellicall countenance and beauty, and the most heavenly disposition and temper of minde that hath bin seene in so young a creature, being not 18 years old," both died of consumption within the same year. And besides the mortification and annoyance which they felt in their son-in-law Lord Strangford's conduct, the haughty and quarrelsome temper of Lord Lisle and

Algernon Sidney was the cause of endless heart-burnings and disagreements. While the elder brother attached himself to Cromwell's person and took office under the Protector, Algernon, true to his Republican sentiments, retired in disgust from public life, and made no secret of his contempt for Cromwell. On one occasion, by way of amusing the household at Penshurst, he caused the play of Julius Caesar to be represented, and himself took the part of Brutus—a proceeding Lord Lisle resented as a personal insult.

In the midst of these troubles and quarrels a ray of light is brought into the family by Lady Sunderland's second marriage, which took place at Penshurst on the eighth of July, 1652. The bridegroom was a Kentish gentleman and near neighbour, Sir Robert Smythe, of Hone and Bounds, and the marriage was celebrated in the presence of a great company of relations and friends, including Dorothy's two married sisters and her brothers Algernon and Robin Sidney. We know nothing of her second husband but that he was a fine martial-looking man, and that Robert Smythe, her only son by this marriage, is often mentioned in her letters as the companion of his half-brother, Lord Sunderland. Her visits to Penshurst were still frequent, and her son grew up on brotherly terms with his uncles, especially the youngest one, Harry, who was about his own age. Lady Leicester died in 1659, and we find Algernon Sidney writing from abroad to beg that a thousand pounds, which Lady Sunderland had lent him for the use of the Strangfords, may be repaid out of a legacy bequeathed to him by his mother.

The following year witnessed the King's restoration, and Lord Leicester was among the first to appear at Court, where Charles received him graciously and made him a Privy Councillor. But soon afterwards he obtained leave to retire to Penshurst, where he died in November, 1677, at the advanced age of eighty-two. By his will he left

a hundred pounds for mourning rings, as a token of his affection to Lady Sunderland and Lady Lucy Pelham, the only two of his nine daughters whom trouble had not estranged or death divided from him.

While the old home at Penshurst was thus slowly breaking up, Lady Sunderland had formed new ties and friendships in another direction. In 1656 her only daughter Dorothy—the Popet to whom her dead lord alluded so tenderly in his last letters—who was then only sixteen, but who with her mother's name had inherited her beauty and wit, married Sir George Savile, afterwards Lord Halifax. In this brilliant and cultivated gentleman Sacharissa found a son-in-law after her own heart; and while his younger brother, Henry Savile, travelled through France and Spain in company with her own son and Harry Sidney, she herself spent most of her time with her daughter at Rufford Abbey, the beautiful home of the Saviles. So constant are Henry Savile's allusions to Lady Sunderland in his letters to his brother and sister-in-law that it would seem she made Rufford her home for several years after the death of her second husband. The letter of apology which he wrote to her in June, 1666, when he had been so unfortunate as to wound her finger by accident, shows that Sacharissa, although a widow and a grandmother, had lost none of her charm in the eyes of the younger generation.

"This I know, that though your ladyship should have so much mercy as ever to forgive me, I will never pardon myself while I live. Were I in condition of giving you the Scripture recompence, I should be too happy, but since all my whole worthless body is of so little value, an eye for an eye or a hand for a hand, would come far short of the satisfaction I ought to pay for rendering useless the fairest hand in the world. What will they say that used to have of your ladyship's letters! To offer myself to your ladyship for your secretary is so poor a satisfaction to them, that I shall raise the whole commonwealth of writers against me to give them my style after having disabled the most eloquent pen in England. All this and

more I am to suffer and yet not half what I deserve; yet it will be some comfort to me in the midst of my afflictions, if abstracting once from this last misfortune, your ladyship be pleased to believe that I am with all respect and truth, madam, your ladyship's most faithful, most humble and most obedient servant,

“HEN. SAVILE.”

And when Lady Sunderland, with her usual good nature, hastened to assure him of her pardon and recovery, he sent her his most humble thanks in another graceful letter.

But these happy days at Rufford were brought to an abrupt close by the sudden death of young Lady Dorothy in 1670, and once more Sacharissa saw in her untimely end,

“ The common fate of all things rare,  
How small a part of time they share  
Who are so wondrous sweet and fair.”

Soon after this sad event Lady Sunderland went to live by herself in London, but her daughter's four children, especially the eldest, her dear Nan, were constantly in her thoughts, and all her life she retained her affection for Rufford. “That you have, my dear lord,” she wrote ten years afterwards, “but a thought of my seeing sweet Rufford again, gives me a dream of happiness.”

The next mention we find of Lady Sunderland is in a letter of her son-in-law, now Lord Halifax, who writing to his brother at Paris in the spring of 1679, speaks of her dangerous illness—an attack of ague, which was only cured by the new Jesuits' powders of *quinquina*, a medicine then first coming into fashion, but which she herself still looked upon with suspicion as coming from a doubtful quarter.

And now we reach that period of Sacharissa's life when the twenty four letters which are, alas! all that remain of her vast correspondence, were written. Of these, thirteen were addressed to her brother Harry, the youngest of Lord Leicester's large family. Born at Paris in 1640, after Dorothy's marriage, he was his

mother's favourite son, the “dear boy” whom she longed so much to see on her death-bed, and to whom she left the Princess Elizabeth's diamond necklace and all that she held most precious. Unlike his brother Algernon, *le beau Sidney*, as Grammont calls him, was a man of loose morals, who prided himself on being invincible with women. Swift denounces him as an idle, drunken, ignorant rake; and Burnet, who praises his sweet, caressing manner and excellent nature, is compelled to own that he had too great a love of pleasure. After being disgraced at Court for an intrigue with the Duchess of York, he had been restored to favour by the influence of his nephew, Lord Sunderland, who sent him to Holland as ambassador, and by this means kept up a secret correspondence with the Prince of Orange. Lady Sunderland shared her mother's love for this spoilt child of the family, and it is to his appreciation of her “poor, silly letters” when he was absent at the Hague that we owe these lively effusions.

But her other correspondent held a place still closer to her heart. This was Lord Halifax, the husband of her dead child, famous as the ablest statesman and most accomplished gentleman of his time. His second marriage to another lady famous for her beauty, Gertrude Pierpoint, Lord Kingston's granddaughter, had not weakened the ties of friendship between him and the mother of his first wife, and it is easy to see the attraction which each had for the other. Dorothy, who as a girl had always affected silence and retiredness and loved to walk alone under the Penshurst beeches, could understand the love of solitude, the taste for study and country pleasures which made Halifax steal away to his dear Rufford, and bury himself in this remote corner of Nottinghamshire at the most stirring times. She could appreciate his speculative, thoughtful turn of mind, and listen with sympathy to those moralisings on the true meaning of life and the vanity

of human things which exasperated his colleagues. Because he rose above the fierce passions which blinded others and could see both sides of a question, because he pleaded for justice and moderation before angry assemblies, he was called a Trimmer, and hated and feared by Whig and Tory alike. "Lord Halifax has come to town," writes Lady Russell to her husband in 1680, not without a touch of sarcasm. "The town says he is to hear all sides and then choose wisely." But three years later he earned her "eternal and undying gratitude" by his noble efforts to save her husband's life. Because he could not always restrain his ready wit, and talked laughingly of serious subjects, he was reproached as an atheist, while as a matter of fact he was more sincerely religious than most of his contemporaries. Sacharissa's eyes saw more clearly, and the judgment she formed of her friend was a truer one. The statesman who dared to lift his voice in the cause of the innocent and oppressed, whatever their creed or party, who dared, at the peril of his own life, to try and save Stafford and Russell, Sidney and Monmouth, in turn, was just the man to win her love and admiration. And his friendship was her stay, his kindness her consolation in the declining years of life, when scarcely another friend she could trust was left to her. How much he valued her letters may be learnt from the careful way in which they were endorsed and preserved by him to the day of his death, when they passed to his son and from him to his daughter and heiress, Lady Dorothy Savile, Countess of Burlington, by whom they came into the Duke of Devonshire's collection.

Both these series of letters were written in the years 1679 and 1680, and, from the nature of their contents and the connection of the writer with the leading statesmen of the day, they form an important contribution to the history of a critical time. We value them above all for the bright and

spirited tone in which they are written, and the pleasant picture they give of Sacharissa in her old age and altered circumstances. We find her a widow for the second time, living no longer at Penshurst or Althorpe but in her "little house" in town, in the neighbourhood of Whitehall. Times were changed indeed since Dorothy Sidney's youth; and the grave Lord Leicester and his excellent wife would have shuddered if they could have seen that palace where the Merry Monarch held his court; those assemblies where vile men and shameless women met to gamble and intrigue, where secretaries of state sat at *ombre* and *basset* with the king's mistresses, with Louise de Querouaille and Mrs. Nelly, while the chief actor among them all, careless of dark plots and rumours of war, of noble hearts breaking and innocent blood shed in his name, thought only how he might best take his ease, eat, drink, and be merry, and shrugged his shoulders with a cynical smile at the fanaticism of his people. And chief among the king's councillors, high in favour with the reigning mistresses, was Sacharissa's own son, Robert, Earl of Sunderland.

His great talents and rapid rise to power had gratified her fondest ambitions, and, after being employed on diplomatic missions to Madrid and Paris, he was now Secretary of State. But with all a mother's pride in his splendid position, with all her anxiety to further his schemes and believe the best of him, it gave her a pang to see her son paying assiduous court to the Duchess of Portsmouth and receiving her at Althorpe, and to hear of the large sums he lost nightly at *basset* being the "common talk of the coffee-houses." Nor could she look without concern on his frequent changes of front, his base desertion of friends, and the unworthy intrigues in which both he and his wife were mixed up. For this second Countess of Sunderland, Ann Digby, daughter of Lord Bristol, was a very different person from the first; and we cannot wonder if there

was little sympathy between the two ladies, although Sacharissa never has a word to say against her daughter-in-law, and only once observed in writing to Lord Halifax, "My daughter is here to my cost : she has begged a dinner of me to-day." Not even her friendship for Evelyn can clear this lady's reputation ; while her letters to her still more intimate friend, Henry Sidney, reveal her deep arts of dissimulation, and justify Queen Anne's expression when she called her, "as great a jade as ever lived, and a fit partner for one of the subtlest workinest villains that is on the face of the earth."

But nothing in Dorothy Sunderland's letters is more remarkable than her loyalty to her son and her strong attachment to the members of her own family. She has a kind word even for her eldest brother, Lord Leicester, who had for years been estranged from his family ; and when he loses the lawsuit brought against him by his brothers on account of his refusal to pay their father's legacies, she tells Henry Sidney :

"I will not congratulate you on your success in Westminster Hall, I have always declared I would not be glad which way soever it did go, though now it were wise to make you some compliment, for I shall never see any other brother again I believe. The more charity it is in you to be a little kind to yours most affectionately,

"D. S."

And she is greatly concerned to hear that Algernon, whose temper had become embittered by misfortune and injustice, is very ill of a cough and can eat nothing but weak gruel. "I do not see him, but have sent to him twice." After which Algernon seems to have repented of his former neglectful treatment. "My brother Algernon upon my sending to know how he did when he was ill, has come to me three times and I believe will continue it, for he seems very well pleased with it. We have not said one word of any difference, and I never contradict him when he says such things as that Sir

William Coventry is no more an able man than a handsome man."

The letters to Lord Halifax are full of affectionate messages to "my dear Nan," Lady Ann Savile, afterwards Lady Vaughan, for whom her father wrote the famous Address to a Daughter, and tender inquiries after "the little rogues," Nan's younger brothers ; and she is full of anxiety about her eldest grandson Henry, Lord Eland's health and prospects. Even Lady Betty, the baby daughter of the second Lady Halifax, comes in for a share of her interest. "I am glad Lady Betty has had but the chicken-pox : I doubt not but my lady has good advice, there needs purging after, to keep the other from following." And as with her own grandchildren so it is with her nephews and nieces, the children of her sister, Lady Lucy Pelham. All the letters are full of allusions to them and two or three are entirely taken up with the marriage of Lucy Pelham to Mr. Pierpoint, Lady Halifax's younger brother. When her sister is ill and Sir John Pelham cannot come to town, she herself undertakes the negotiations with Lady Halifax and Mr. Pierpoint himself, and brings them to a successful issue.

"The gentleman," she writes to her brother "proceeds fairly and has good expectations from an aunt who is three-score years old and has a quartan ague." "To be her heir is something," she adds merrily, "but if I were forty years younger than I am, I would not care to be yours." Still, her task is not altogether easy. "One finds fault that he does not talk, that is better than what they say sometimes ; another finds fault with his person, who have little reason, God knows, to meddle with that. I have been a little peevish to them, so I shall hear no more, but she who is so wise as to find no fault—the worst of him is his complexion, and the small-pox is not out of his face yet ; he had them but eight months ago." In her next letter she triumphantly

writes that the marriage - treaty is almost ended before good Sir John has appeared on the scene. It is amusing to see with what zest she enters into all the particulars, and makes the best bargain that she can for her niece, securing a handsome jointure and a very pretty town-house, "so furnished as that will be very considerable to a woman," and seeing that coach and horses and footmen are all provided. "Now I have told the good, and now," she goes on,

"I must come to the ill one. His person is ugly ; last night he came to me with his sister, he is well enough drest and behaved, of very few words. The fortune is good no doubt and she will do better than many who have double. I desired her to tell me if she had any distaste to him, and I would order it so that it should not go on, and her father should not be angry with her, but she is wiser than to refuse it. He is not more ill-favoured than Montague [who married Lucy's eldest sister] and his wife kisses him all day and calls him her pretty dear. I tell Lucy she shall not do so, hers will be much such a pretty dear. Though his person is not taking, 'tis like to do very well. He was alone with me and I found his sense very good. I was told by a very understanding person that those who know him well, say he is a very honest, worthy gentleman. Nan Savile hath no regret but to be at her cousin's wedding. I think all is agreed upon now. The articles were signed yesterday, and the gentleman had leave to wait upon his mistress. Nan Savile is very comical about this business, sometimes they are great friends and very familiar. Mr. Pierpont has promised her that if he is so happy as to have Mrs. Pelham, and that she is willing, they shall come to Rufford this summer. This is an article of marriage that hath given great satisfaction."

"Her mother," she writes again, "is very well pleased with the marriage, and so is every one that is kind to her. Her father might have married her worse and cheaper." The marriage took place at Holland, the family seat of the Pelhams, in March, 1680, and Tom Pelham, the bride's brother, came to assure his aunt that all was well, and her niece as well pleased as anybody. The news was a great relief to Lady Sunderland, who owns she had felt a little fearful as to the result, and afraid her niece loved more compliments and mirth than she will ever find.

"I prepared her as well as I could not to expect it. He is not a pleasant man—very few are ; neither is he the very next sort for entertainment. One thing pleased when he said, 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow,' he put a purse upon the book with 200 guineas ; everybody puts somewhat, but this is the most I have heard. They will be here before Easter, and then you shall hear more."

True to her promise she writes to Henry Sidney in April :

"Our new-married niece is as well pleased as ever I saw anybody ; she says he is as kind as she can desire. Notwithstanding Pierpoint blood, he is very willing to let her have everything to the uttermost of his fortune. He bids her buy what plate and furniture she will and he will pay for it. Her brother and I have had a serious discourse upon her management, which we both suspect, for she is giddy and delighted with liberty and money. We have resolved to give her the best advice we can, that she may not abuse his freedom to her, for his great rich relations will not think well of her if she is too expensive. She is a little too free and too merry in appearance, and he very grave and has an ill opinion of his own person."

All the same her mother "is much delighted with the marriage, and he is very fond of her." Here the writer adds :

"The rain and thunder is in extremity at this instant ; it gives me ten spleens besides my own. This weather I hope will keep my sister in town a few days longer ; she was always very kind to me, but her daughter's marriage has made her more so. If my love is worth anything, upon my honest word you have more of it than ever you had or can care for."

But a month later her tone changes and she confides her fears to Lord Halifax with some trepidation :

"Here is my secret : I fear Mr. Pierpoint will not prove a good husband he is yet fond of her, but so unquiet in his house and so miserable, the servants say, in all that is not for show that they are all weary and coming away. He calls the women all the ill names that are, and meddles with everything in the kitchen much. All this is at Montague's and will soon be everywhere. Yesterday I heard he would put away her woman for saying, 'God bless her mistress, she would be glad never to see her master again.'"

And when Lord Halifax urges Dorothy to give her niece good advice, she assures him that she has done

this, and thinks the girl herself is inclined to good.

"I have heard things that make me think she will have a hard task ; she does not complain and will not own what I know. Though it is not very kind I do not blame her for it. I have desired that she will not be more free with her other friends, my sister would be troubled and show it, and others would be glad and talk. She does observe him as much as possible. Severity well understood has no bounds. I long to see your lordship most violently, and love and pray for you as well as I can.

"D. S."

These letters show us Sacharissa as she was at sixty, true and good in an age of slandering tongues and corrupt morals, full of life and spirit, of good sense and wisdom, keen of insight but kindly in her judgments, apt, as she says, to get a little warm when those dear to her are attacked, but quick to forgive and make friends again, "ever agreeable," and therefore, in Lady Mary Wortley Montague's words, "ever beloved."

Her old friend Waller, being asked by her in jest when he would write some more verses like those he had penned of old for her, was so uncourtly as to reply : "When you are as young again, madam, and as handsome as you were then." But all the same, Sacharissa had still a strange fascination for him, and we find him constantly paying her visits and bringing her the latest news. He himself, "old Waller" as she calls him, was very much out of fashion, and we learn from Sir William Temple's letters that he had become the object of all the new wits' ridicule. But Lady Sunderland did not forget the friends of her youth, and was agreed with Temple that "some of the old cut-work bands were of as fine thread and as well wrought as any of our new point."

She herself had it plain lost none of her charm, and although she liked to call herself "the poor old dolt in the corner," in point of fact she knew and heard all that was going on. Her intimate connection with the leading statesmen of both parties naturally

gave her a keen interest in politics and afforded her special advantages for hearing the gossip of the day. Not only were her son and son-in-law both in office, but Lord Essex had married one of her cousins, the Percies, and Sir William Temple, who with these three made up the number of the King's confidential advisers, was a nephew of Dr. Hammond, and had grown up with the Sidneys at Penshurst. At the same time Lord Shaftesbury, the unprincipled leader of the Opposition, had married as his third wife, Margaret Spencer, her first husband's sister. For this last-named statesman she had no love, and does not conceal her aversion to him, nor her satisfaction when she learns that her brother Algernon, who had been alarming her by his republican doctrines, has quarrelled with him and that "this is like to go as high as tongues can." As might be expected Lady Sunderland was constantly employed to send messages from her brother and son to Halifax, who after his wont had slipped away to Rufford, "liking the country air very well," in the spring of 1680, much to his colleague's vexation and her own disappointment.

"I am vexed at my Lord Halifax's not coming to town. I doubt not but that he will. I love things well timed, I hope some of his wise friends will persuade him. . . . I am sure he had resolved to be at Rufford all this spring and summer four or five months ago."

And at the same time she writes to Halifax :

"My brother Harry wrote to me, you being in the country is the worst news he has heard a great while ; he is so silly as to write to me to beg of you to come again. The mutineers say you will come no more till a parliament sits. As the Queen said of you, I hope you have not told them your mind, for they are your enemies and the nation's too, who wish not one honest man near the king."

For his benefit she repeats all the news she can glean ; how the King is as fond of the Duke of York's coming as if he were a mistress of a week's date ; how the Duke of Monmouth uses his wife barbarously and pays

court to Lady Wentworth's daughter ; how violent is the running against the Duke of York ; and how Mr. Hampden was heard to say we shall have the Prince of Orange here with an army ; and how her son has been dining with her, "which he has not done these seven years," and telling her how jealous every one is of Halifax's influence at Court. "I am so vexed to have your name abused by these common cheats that it has put me out of every little stuff I had to say. It has made me so hot, loving my friends as myself ; and if anybody did such a trick to me, I am sure I would never see them more." No wonder Halifax in his country house and Henry Sidney at the Hague were delighted with such a correspondent.

All that year there had been no meeting of Parliament, and Lady Sunderland's letters reflect the growing anxiety of the public mind as the spring and summer months went by and still Halifax lingered at Rufford. She talks gloomily of those, "who have designs that can never be compassed but by the whole nation being in a flame" ; and adds, "I wish I had no ground for this, but that it was only an effect of my spleen." "I pray God," she says further on, "the moderate, honest people may be the greatest number. If not, you are all undone. I am afraid good people will wish they had not been passive and given the advantage of time so much to the ill ones to act. I am old enough to remember the ill consequences of princes being deceived." At length on the seventeenth of September, Halifax came to town, to Lady Sunderland's great joy. "God send us a happy meeting and to you every good thing," she wrote on hearing the good news.

In October Parliament met amid great excitement, and the Exclusion Bill was passed by a large majority in the Commons, and taken up to the Lords by Russell "with a mighty shout, which made many present think of forty-one," and tremble lest they

were about to witness another great tragedy. Then it was that Lord Halifax, deserted by his colleagues, for Sunderland had at the last moment gone over to the enemy, dared alone to resist the popular cry and oppose the Bill in the name of justice, of reason, and of honour.

His speeches on that occasion were long remembered for their surpassing eloquence and reason, and old men far on in the next century were often heard to speak of them as masterpieces of oratory unequalled in parliamentary debate. In the words of one who was present he did "out do himself and every other man." The impassioned earnestness of the speaker, the silver tones of that clear voice, carried conviction with them, and the Bill was thrown out by a large majority. The fury of the defeated party knew no bounds. "Lord Halifax has undone all, and is hated more than ever the Lord Treasurer was, and has really deserved it," wrote Lord Sunderland's wife to Henry Sidney on the sixteenth of November, the day after the rejection of the Bill ; and an address was carried in the House of Commons, praying the King to remove Lord Halifax from his councils. No wonder Lady Sunderland's heart was deeply stirred, and that she wrote in generous indignation to her brother :

"I am full of my Lord Halifax, and will tell what perhaps nobody else will—that a day or two before the Duke's Bill was carried to the Lords, one of the great actors came to him as a friend I suppose, to tell him if he did speak against it he would be impeached by the House of Commons, or an address made to the King to remove him from his great place of Privy Counsellor. He answered, neither threatenings nor promises should hinder him from speaking his mind. How he did it, you who know may judge. In a point, he says he has studied more than he ever did any, and would have been glad if he could have gone the popular and safe way. He had company enough with him, but my Lord of Shaftesbury and Mr. Mertague have singled him out of the herd of sixty-three that were of his mind, to desire to remove him from the King, having given no reason yet but that common fame said he had been for proroguing the Parliament,

and having very great parts, which made him the more dangerous. As he came out of the Lords' House, he was told that the House of Commons was upon this debate, which was very long. He said he would go home to dinner. He did not speak with one man, because they should not say he was making friends, and so he did. In the afternoon his house was full of House of Commons' men. My son was there at one time—that is the thorn in my side, though in everything else they agree; but it cannot be as I would have it, so long as my son is well with Lord Shaftesbury. . . . Halifax has desired the King to let him go. They will come much nearer to his Majesty's concerns than my Lord Halifax. In short, he says, he will speak his mind and not be hanged so long as there is law in England. I am not well—pardon this narrative. I were a beast if I were not concerned for so perfect and constant a good friend."

Then a week later she wrote again :

" You may perhaps hear from me some little truths that others have not leisure to write. I believe I was warm when I writ last, with the malice to my Lord Halifax. My son told me that they did repent it and were ashamed of it; but more than that, Tom Pelham, who must be violent or not live with Father Jones, told me the major part of the House was ashamed and sorry for it, but would not venture their credit for what they were indifferent to. So they went with the address, and yesterday the King sent them word my Lord Halifax was of his council, and he did know no reason why he should not be. If they did, the law was open and the Parliament sitting, and they might proceed. How they took the encouragement I know not: 'tis an answer as new as the charge which Tom Pelham owns to be without precedent. I could tell a hundred other things. My Lord Cavendish desired them to let one alone they had nothing against, for those they had. My Lord Shaftesbury disowns having anything to do in it and my Lord Russell. I heard it was Montague and the two lawyers, Jones and Winnington, who show their profession. . . . If they say any more he is ready to answer for himself. I tell him he would be talking. I believe it will do him good in the general, it was so malicious. One asked what shall we charge him with? Montague said, 'with being an enemy to his King and country.' Winnington said, 'let us take heed of that, we cannot prove it.' Yesterday the Duchess of Portsmouth went in her own coach with my Lady Sunderland to dine with our cousin Cheeks in the Tower. She may go where she will now she is a favourite of the House of Commons. She dined at my son's a few days ago, and after dinner the king came in as he used to do. I hope he is not angry. A great many who differ from my Lord Halifax as to the Bill, say few besides him that came within Whitehall could decide the House at this time.

My dear Mr. Sidney, take this ugly scribble in good part; 'tis so dark, though at noon, that I can neither see nor feel. Some things lie heavy at my heart. If you were in my corner you should know all my ~~secrets~~. I durst trust you and love you well.

" D. S."

It was a critical moment, and other hearts besides hers were full of gloomy fears. On the twelfth of December, Mr. Evelyn looking out of his window towards the west at night, "saw a meteor of an obscure bright colour, very much in shape like the blade of a sword, the rest of the sky very serene and clear. What this may portend God only knows! But such another phenomenon I remember to have seen in 1640, about the trial of the great Earl of Strafford, preceding our bloody rebellion. I pray God avert His judgments." Before the month was over, the good and innocent Lord Stafford had died on the scaffold, condemned on the witness of perjurors, and no one knew who the next victim might be. A day or two before the execution, Sir John Reresby assisted at the King's *coucher*, and found him "quite free from care and trouble and in a very good humour, talking for two full hours as he put off his clothes, of the fallacy of those who pretend to a fuller measure of sanctity than their neighbours, and are for the most part arrant knaves."

But Lord Halifax had won the day. The King insisted on his retaining office and exalted him to new honours, while Sunderland was dismissed from all his posts, and compelled to retire to Althorpe, where he remained in disgrace for two years. "You'll be sorry," wrote his wife to Henry Sidney, "when you hear my lord is in so great a degree in the King's disfavour that he has not only turned us out but without letting us have the money my lord paid for it—a sort of hardship nobody has suffered from his Majesty but us." And she adds bitterly that "this is all Lord Halifax's fault." Dorothy must have looked with mingled feelings on her son's disgrace

and the triumph of her noble friend. But here Sacharissa's letters end. Whether the pains she speaks of as "troubling her old limbs mightily" increased so that she could write no more, or whether her later letters have been lost, we cannot tell. But she lived three years longer, and saw some of her worst fears justified, when first Lord Russell, and then her own brother Algernon, were brought to the block, and perished in spite of all Halifax's generous and untiring efforts to save these victims of party hate. Her "perfect and constant good friend" stood by her till death came to close

her troubled life, and she was buried in the vault of the Spencers at Brington, by the side of the "dear lord" who had been laid there more than forty years before. Her lot was cast in stormy times, and neither her goodness nor her beauty could save her from Fate's hardest blows, but in spite of these Sacharissa had her share of the best life has to give. Many will think it no small thing to have been painted by Vandyck and sung by Waller: a few will count it even more to have been the wife of Sunderland and the friend of Halifax.

JULIA CARTWRIGHT.

## CHRIS.

## CHAPTER IV.

CHRIS had always hitherto been accustomed to perform her railway travelling in a more or less luxurious fashion. Her father had been a man who detested discomfort of any kind, and for such a journey as that from Cannes to Paris he would, as a matter of course, have engaged a *coupé salon*. James Compton had no such extravagant notions. He remarked that it was nothing short of scandalous to make up an express train of first-class carriages only, and Chris agreed with him until he added, "If there had been any seconds, it would have been right for us, perhaps, to take advantage of them. Our joint expenses will, of course, have to be defrayed out of the estate, and they ought to be curtailed as much as possible."

After that, Chris thought there might perhaps be something to be said in favour of the French system.

However, she and her companion were made as uncomfortable as they could well be. The annual return of the pilgrims who leave England for the south on the approach of winter had set in: the train was crowded: the compartment into which Chris and her escort were thrust by a peremptory guard had but two vacant places: worst of all, Peter was borne off to the dog-hole, despite the entreaties of his mistress.

"If people will insist upon travelling with dogs, they must submit to these trifling inconveniences," remarked Mr. Compton, as he put on a velvet smoking-cap, and settled himself in a corner of the carriage.

He had taken care to secure a corner for himself. Chris was less fortunate, being jammed between

him and a corpulent Englishman, who fell asleep, snored loudly, dropped his head upon her shoulder, and seemed quite angry when she modestly asserted her rights by digging him in the ribs with her elbow. Altogether it was a most miserable journey; and, to add to its annoyances, shortly after leaving Marseilles Peter had the misfortune to bite the guard, who had been bribed to transfer him from the dog-hole into the van. It is absolutely certain that that official must have done something to deserve what he got, for Peter was not at all the sort of dog to bite any one, without good reason; but, of course, as justice is understood in the world at present, provocation is no more excuse for a dog who bites a man than it is for a soldier who strikes his superior officer. The guard, boiling over with wrath, came to exhibit his wound, and Chris had to pay up a hundred francs, besides offering the humblest of apologies.

"I expected this!" sighed Mr. Compton, as he handed over the money; which was an irritating and idiotic thing to say, because he could not possibly have anticipated anything of the sort.

On arriving at Paris in the early morning, Mr. Compton, who had slept profoundly all through the night, and asserted unblushingly that he had not even closed his eyes, declared himself to be fairly broken down with fatigue, which emboldened Chris to suggest that they should make a halt of twenty-four hours. "The extra expense to be laid upon the estate," she added demurely.

"Very well, Christina; if you insist upon it, let it be so," answered the man-of-law resignedly. "This change

of plans will, however, entail telegraphing to Mrs. Compton and Miss Ramsden, which will mean a further outlay of at least ten shillings, I suppose."

Chris said that probably that last half-sovereign would not break the estate's back; so they drove to an hotel and had a day of rest; and in the evening Mr. Compton treated himself to a stall at the *Variétés*, remarking to his niece that, in the melancholy circumstances, she would naturally not wish to accompany him to any place of entertainment.

She certainly had no such wish. After he had left her, she put on her hat and took Peter for a run to the gardens of the Tuileries, where perhaps she had no business to be walking all by herself at that hour, but where she met with no molestation. Indeed, it seemed to her that the passers-by surveyed her in a friendly, compassionate way, as if they knew that she was about to be carried off to a land in which friendliness is a plant of slower growth. The French people have their faults, and these, it must be confessed, have of late years been made more conspicuous to strangers than their virtues; but Chris, at any rate, had found them generous and warm-hearted, and now that she was upon the point of leaving France, where she had been so happy, she was inclined, like Mary Queen of Scots, to exclaim, "*Adieu, nos beaux jours!*"

She sat down upon one of the iron chairs, while Peter pursued busy investigations in the vicinity and scratched up showers of gravel backwards with his hind legs. "When shall I see Paris again?" she wondered. "When shall I be able to do as I like again? How I wish I knew what was going to become of me!"

It is only in very early youth that we desire to pry into the future. Long before we reach middle age we have learnt enough to know better than that; and if Chris could have

been told in what circumstances she was next to see that pleasant city, the information would scarcely have tended to raise her drooping spirits. It was a warm evening, and she sat still until after dark, thinking of old days and old friends, and resolving that, whatever fate might be in store for her, she would face it bravely; but it was a significant circumstance that as soon as she found herself thinking of Val Richardson, she jumped up, whistled to Peter, and walked briskly back towards the hotel.

On the ensuing evening the travellers reached Charing Cross, where they took leave of one another with little regret on either side. Mr. Compton, who had been wofully sick crossing the Channel, and who was even more sorry for himself than usual, offered to see his charge safely to her destination—"although it is a long drive and quite out of my way, and Mrs. Compton particularly dislikes being kept waiting for dinner."

"Pray don't think of it," said Chris; "if you will tell the man where to drive, I shall be all right. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," replied Mr. Compton. "If at any time you should have any observation or—er—complaint to make to me, a letter addressed to 192 Bedford Row will receive attention."

Chris, as she was driven away in the jolting cab, made a little grimace. "I dare say he has taken a lot of trouble, and perhaps one ought to be grateful," said she aloud; "but I can't like him and I don't. Do you, Peter?"

Peter grunted. He had made his opinion of Mr. Compton known at a much earlier stage of the proceedings, and such as his opinions were, he was not in the habit of changing them.

The drive was indeed a long one. Chris soon found herself in a part of London which she had never seen before, and of which the attractions were not such as to make her feel that

she had been a loser by not having seen it. Gloomy respectability appeared to be its chief outward characteristic, and unbroken monotony its doom : it was impossible to believe that in such a district, vast though it was, there could dwell a single human being of ordinarily cheerful temperament. Balaclava Terrace, when at length it was reached, proved to be a trifle more gloomy, though doubtless not less respectable than the neighbouring streets. To Chris it looked almost squalid in its mean ugliness. A row of small red-brick houses, each one the exact duplicate of the other, each with two windows on the ground floor and three on the first floor, each with a shabby little stuccoed portico—she could not help laughing for a moment at the oddity of the notion that she was going to live in a place like that.

The door-bell of No. 25 had to be rung twice before an elderly, plain-faced and somewhat sullen-looking woman, who wore a print gown and an apron, made her appearance. "You needn't tear the 'ole place down," she said resentfully to the cabman ; "you ain't in such a desp'rate 'urry but what you can allow a person five seconds to climb up the kitching stairs, I suppose."

"Does Miss Ramsden live here ?" Chris inquired.

"All right, miss ; you're expected," answered the woman, "and you'll find Miss Rebecca in the parlour. Left 'and door as you go in. Praps you'd best pay the cabman first, though, and give him somethink extra for carrying the boxes up stairs." Then, in a perfectly audible aside, she ejaculated, "Dogs too ! What next, I should like to know !"

Chris, having settled with the cabman, followed the directions given her, entered the house and announced herself.

The room into which she advanced was a shabby and scantily-furnished one ; such furniture as it contained exhibited signs of extreme antiquity ;

and so, Chris was amazed to see, did the lady who rose slowly and stiffly to receive her. She had never imagined that her father's sister-in-law could be such a very old woman. As a matter of fact Miss Ramsden had been by many years senior to her late sister ; yet she was not nearly as old as she looked, being at this time scarcely sixty. She was, however, crippled by chronic rheumatism, and moved with difficulty, leaning on a stick. For the rest, she was not a prepossessing-looking old woman. Her rusty black gown seemed to have seen almost as much service as her sofas and chairs : her iron-grey hair was rough and untidy : her shaggy eyebrows overhung a pair of restless, suspicious black eyes ; and her mouth, which was never still for a moment, had a querulous expression which was quite in accordance with her piping voice.

"I understood that you were to arrive yesterday," she said complainingly. "That lawyer man frightened me to death with his telegram : I am not accustomed to receiving telegrams."

Chris apologised, and explained that both she and her escort had been so tired by their journey from Cannes, that they had thought it as well to take a day's rest in Paris.

"You would have had plenty of time to rest here in a comfortable house, which would have been better than squandering your money in a foreign hotel, I should have thought ; but your father's daughter was sure to be extravagant, and no doubt you will have your own way in everything, like your poor mother, and it isn't for me to speak. I said to that lawyer, 'I am willing to give her house-room and every comfort ; but more than that you must not ask of me.' I can't change people's natures or make them go right if they are determined to go wrong. I am only a weak old woman, and nobody ever thinks of obeying me. Get off that chair this instant, you nasty, dirty little beast !"

This last apostrophe, which was uttered in a much shriller and more authoritative key, was addressed to Peter, who had stationed himself in an armchair and was surveying the speaker dubiously, with his ears cocked and his head on one side.

"Come down, Peter!" said Chris. She added in conciliatory accents, "He is a very good dog: I don't think you will find him in your way, Aunt Rebecca."

"I have consented to let you keep him," returned Miss Ramsden, with a sigh. "I have brought him upon myself, and I must put up with him. But he shall not destroy the furniture: that much I do think I have a right to require."

It did not take Chris many days to discover that her aunt was one of those persons who must needs have a grievance, and to whom it is wisest to concede that privilege without argument. Perhaps the chief reason why Chris made friends wherever she went was that she was so quick at reading character and so ready to allow for the failings and peculiarities of her neighbours. Many of us plume ourselves not a little upon an acquired philosophy which came by nature to this child. There is, however, one vice which young people can very rarely bring themselves to pardon; and this, as it happened, was Miss Ramsden's ruling passion. Chris suspected it when she was invited to partake of a cup of weak tea and a slice of bread and butter, instead of dinner: she was sure of it on the morrow, when it proved that Martha, the sullen-looking woman who had admitted her, was the only servant kept in the establishment; that dinner, which took place in the middle of the day, was represented by a couple of mutton chops and a wedge of uneatable cheese; and that half an inch of candle was considered to be amply enough to light her to bed. Nevertheless, she did not think of penning that remonstrance which her father's

executor had almost invited. She cared a great deal more for liberty than she did for food; and she soon perceived that her aunt was not likely to grudge the one so long as she was not pestered for a sufficient supply of the other. It is impossible to feel much affection or any respect for the niggardly; but it is possible to tolerate them, if they be not tyrants into the bargain, and Chris did her best to conciliate the unamiable old woman with whom she was constrained to dwell.

The result was a complete failure—the first failure of the kind that Chris had ever encountered. Miss Ramsden cared for nothing and nobody in the whole world, except money, and why she should have cared for that, considering how little it did for her, is one of the inexplicable mysteries of human nature. But although she had lost her power of love, she had not lost that of hate, and from the outset she and Peter became bitter enemies. In justice to her, it must be acknowledged that Peter was not altogether blameless in the matter of this prolonged and deadly feud. He knew, of course, that she disliked him, and knowing that, obeyed his natural instinct by doing all that he could to annoy her. He jumped upon the chairs, getting down with alacrity and with an air of innocent surprise when commanded to do so: he rubbed himself against her legs with a false air of friendship as soon as he discovered that she particularly disliked this habit: he lay in ambush for her when she was coming down stairs, and bounced out at her, barking loudly, in the hope of making her miss her footing. Also he would pretend to be overcome by fits of uncontrollable spirits, and would tear round and round the drawing room, his legs flying in all directions, and his claws scratching the worn-out carpet, until she shrieked to her niece to stop him.

"That beast," she gasped, "will end by going mad and biting us all—I know he will!"

At dinner-time she took her revenge. Peter was accustomed to having a little meat with his dinner, as all dogs of his breed ought to have, and against this practice Miss Ramsden would protest vehemently. It was bad for "the beast": it was a sinful waste of food, which many a poor man would be thankful to have: it was not what she had bargained for when she had agreed to allow a dog into her house; and so forth. For the first two or three days Chris calmly disregarded these attacks: but then she began to find them insupportable. Only a very thick-skinned person can bear to listen to the same speeches at the same hour on every day of the week *ad infinitum*, and it was evident that Peter would have to be fed at some time when Miss Ramsden's soul would not be vexed by seeing him eat.

Thus it was that Chris arrived at an amicable understanding with Martha, to whom Peter had already become suspiciously civil. Martha, when taxed with her offence, pleaded guilty to the extent of "a few odd bits and scraps." She said, in an aggressive sort of way, that she wasn't going to see man nor beast starved on them premises, and though "not partial" to dogs as a general thing, confessed to a sneaking fondness for this one. With the mistaken kindness of her class, she would doubtless have fed poor Peter to death had she possessed the means of doing so; but, fortunately for him, she did not. To keep herself alive upon the daily dole of rations served out to her was about as much as she could contrive; yet she made no complaint, and was greatly displeased with Chris for suggesting that she was entitled to complain.

"Woman and girl, I've lived with Miss Rebecca these thirty years," said she, "and if she has her faults 'tisn't for me to lay my finger upon 'em. Maybe she's a bit near: who says she ain't? There's been spendthrifts as well as misers in the family, I understand."

However, she insisted upon surreptitiously supplying nourishment to the girl as well as well as to the dog; and it must be confessed the former often felt the need of it as much as the latter. "Don't you let on to Miss Rebecca, my dear," Martha would say, when she carried up a tray of refreshments to Chris's bedroom. "I know how to manage her, and if the bills comes to four or five shillings a week extra, why four or five extra shillings she will have to pay, and that's all about it."

To have conciliated Martha was something; but it was hardly enough to make life endurable to one who had hitherto lived in a world peopled by friends, and Chris could not but feel sore when week after week passed by and these friends gave no sign of remembering her. The newspapers told her that the Duchess of Islay, and Lady Barnstaple, and a host of others were in London, and that Lady Grace Severne had been presented; but none of them found their way to Primrose Hill, and Chris had nothing to do and nothing to look forward to except to take Peter for a walk in the Regent's Park every afternoon, and play *bésique* with her aunt every evening. Moreover, her aunt grumbled at her unceasingly.

"I have surrounded you with luxuries," the old woman would say (she pronounced the word "lulgurries," which somehow gave it a richer sound): "I do everything that I can think of to make you happy; and yet you look miserable and seem to consider yourself ill-used. That was just your poor mother's way. She didn't know when she was well off. She insisted upon marrying a man who spent her whole fortune in a year; and I fully expect that you will follow in her footsteps."

It really seemed quite possible. If Val Richardson had made his appearance at that time, Chris would probably have consented to marry him; and if he could have obtained control over her fortune, he would assuredly have

dissipated it within the period named. But the longest lane has a turning. One day, about the middle of the month of July, the denizens of Balaclava Terrace were startled by the apparition of a very smart victoria which dashed up to the door of No. 25, and out of it stepped a stout, homely-looking lady, who asked for Miss Compton.

"My dear," Lady Barnstaple said, when she had embraced her young friend, and had been introduced to Aunt Rebecca, who fixed a stony, covetous stare upon her diamond ear-rings, "you have been calling us all sorts of bad names, I am sure. But you see, I knew you could not be going out anywhere while you were in such deep mourning, and next season, when you discover what it is to have an engagement for every hour of every day, you will find it more easy to pardon us. But Heaven be praised! the season is almost over now, and next week I am going to take Gracie down to my little cottage in Devonshire to recruit. Will you come with us, if your aunt can be induced to spare you for a week or two?"

Miss Ramsden inclined her head solemnly and sorrowfully. "I should be unwilling," said she, "to prevent my niece from amusing herself in any way. I have done my best; but I cannot flatter myself that she has found my society amusing."

Lady Barnstaple smiled and looked as if that announcement did not greatly surprise her. "A little change is always good for young people," she remarked. "As far as amusement goes, I'm afraid we haven't much of that to offer you, Chris; but it will be a great pleasure to Gracie to have you with her again, if you will come. I ought to tell you that she has been bothering me to call upon you for weeks past. To-day she has gone to Hurlingham with one of her sisters. If you haven't seen us long ago, you must blame me and try to forgive me."

Chris, who at first had been a little inclined to hang back from the tardy advances made to her, was mollified when Lady Barnstaple took her hand and squeezed it and looked at her with a broad, good-humoured smile.

"I did think Gracie had forgotten me," she confessed; "but I'm glad she hasn't, and I should like very much to go to Devonshire with you, Lady Barnstaple."

## CHAPTER V.

LORD BARNSTAPLE, who owned many acres in North Devon, was not particularly fond of visiting the county from which he took his title. He was a very rich man, owning estates in other parts of England upon which he was more or less bound to reside; moreover he had a moor and a deer-forest in Scotland which engaged his attention from the twelfth of August until late in the autumn. Lady Barnstaple however was wont, at the close of the London season, to betake herself for weeks, or even months, to Brentstow Cottage, which was hardly a cottage in the ordinary acceptation of the term. It may have started in life with some claim to that denomination; but it had been so frequently and so extensively added to that it could accommodate a considerable number of guests, despite its unpretending style of architecture and the smallness of its reception rooms.

Guests came to Lady Barnstaple, as guests do in these days, for two or three nights: there were arrivals and departures every morning and evening; but Chris was begged to stay on as long as she liked, and the invitation was so cordially given that she could not doubt its sincerity. The hospitality to which she was made welcome had been extended to her beloved Peter; so that she had no reason for wishing to return to Balaclava Terrace, whence Miss Ramsden never stirred from year's end to year's end. And

life at Brentstow was rendered very pleasant to her. Her time was her own to employ as she chose : she was neither neglected nor entertained, a mode of treatment which sounds simple and is difficult in practice, as many hostesses and many guests are aware : the great people who alighted for a while on their way to or from one of the neighbouring great houses, and whom she scarcely saw except at dinner-time, were kind and civil to her, and she got on very well with them all, though she had begun to understand that their class was not the same as hers. Her father's book-plates exhibited a coat of arms with numerous quarterings, and she had always imagined that the difference between her father and a duke was only one of degree ; but now she perceived that fashionable people, whether dukes or not, live in a world of their own, from which unfashionable people are perforce excluded, and that there was no likelihood of her ever being admitted into that earthly paradise.

Even Lady Grace, unassuming as she was, had been a little changed by her season in London. The two girls resumed their friendship, but could not take it up exactly where they had dropped it. The one, being rather pretty, a good deal admired, and certain to marry well before long, accepted without elation a destiny which she had foreseen, and unconsciously assimilated the tastes and habits which belong to it : the other knew not what might be before her, only she knew that, such as her dreams had been, they could never now be fulfilled. It is always sad that young people should not have what they would like to have. We, whose youth is past, have ceased to be exacting : we know what is attainable and what is not : it does not occur to us to cry for the moon : we have watched the careers of our contemporaries and are thankful enough for negative blessings. Yet some of us, who have not forgotten the days when we were less

easily satisfied, can feel for boys and girls who before they have outgrown the age of illusions are made to understand that the world was not created for them.

However Chris, as has been said before, was something of a philosopher. The future being dim and somewhat gloomy, she wisely left it to take care of itself ; and she was able to enjoy the present, notwithstanding that new-born consciousness of being "an outsider" and her inability to take part in conversations which dealt with men and matters whereof she was necessarily ignorant. Sometimes she went out riding with Lady Grace and one or other of the young men who appeared and disappeared like meteors ; but more often she and Peter went out for a ramble by themselves after luncheon and appreciated the pleasures of a country life after their respective fashions.

Peter, poor fellow, had poaching instincts which he could not always control ; but he tried harder than most of us do to curb his natural passions, and it was only when his mistress lost sight of him that temptation got the upper hand of his moral sense. For this reason, and in consequence of certain rather uncalled-for complaints on the part of the keeper, Chris took care never to lose sight of him, and one afternoon she made him sit down beside her, as usual, on the outskirts of a wood whence a view could be obtained of the long Atlantic rollers breaking against a barrier of grey cliffs and gigantic boulders. Having established herself comfortably with her back against the trunk of a tree, she drew a long letter from Madame Lavergne out of her pocket and began leisurely reading it through for the second time. She was laughing softly as she perused a passage in which her correspondent related how the Doctor had got himself into sad trouble by writing to the local papers to denounce the drainage of a certain quarter of the town as calculated to

produce pestilence, when she was interrupted by a volley of furious barks from Peter, who until then had been sitting disconsolately on his haunches, shivering all over and whimpering under his breath in token of his knowledge that there were rabbits in the neighbourhood and of his desire to make closer acquaintance with them.

The cause of his present excitement was evident: somebody close at hand was thrashing a dog. Chris could hear each blow as it fell, and the yells which followed might have been heard half a mile away. Up she jumped—for, by her way of thinking, the beating of a dog was an act which called for instant explanation—and, hurrying towards the direction from which the clamour proceeded, she presently descried in an adjoining field a tall, broad-shouldered young man who had got a Gordon setter by the collar and was administering castigation with no light hand.

"Leave that dog alone!" shouted Chris indignantly; and as her behest was unheard or unheeded, she started running towards the aggressor. "You there!" she called out again when she was within a few yards of him; "let that dog go at once!"

The young man raised an astonished face. It was a red face, partially concealed by a reddish beard, the face of a clown, though his appearance was that of a gentleman. He was dressed in a Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers and a deer-stalker cap, which last he lifted with the hand which held his stick when he saw that he was being addressed by a lady.

"Excuse me," said he, half politely, half angrily, "but perhaps you don't know that this dog belongs to me."

"I don't care who he belongs to," returned Chris; "you sha'n't ill-treat him like that."

Perhaps the stranger was tickled by the brave words and diminutive stature of his assailant; perhaps, and more probably, he was attracted by

her pretty face. At any rate he burst into a loud laugh, released his victim with a parting kick, and strode towards the fence over which Chris was leaning, while Peter trotted up to the setter to ask what it was all about, and got snarled at for his pains.

"You see," cried Chris, pointing to the two dogs, "you are ruining the poor beast's temper. That is what always comes of thrashing them."

"May I ask," the young man inquired deferentially, yet with a slight covert suggestion of insolence, "whether you have had a large experience in training sporting-dogs?"

Chris admitted that she had no such special knowledge. "But," said she, "I do know something about dogs in general, and I know that they are never thrashed in such a cruel way except by people who are too stupid or too brutal to be trusted with dogs at all."

"Well," returned the gentleman with the red beard, who did not look good-tempered, yet kept his temper in circumstances which most men would have found trying, "I may be stupid. All the same, I have broken in a good many dogs, first and last, and I have always had to lick them. How do you account for the fact that all my dogs are fond of me?"

"I don't account for it," answered Chris, not a whit appeased. "For one thing, I don't know that it is a fact; and if it were, it would only show how superior your dogs are to you. Why can't you have a little patience with them? If they disobey you, it is only because they don't understand what you want."

The stranger laughed again and seated himself sideways on the fence. "We won't argue the point," he said. "I think you are mistaken; but I'll give your system a trial with this brute, if you like. Will that satisfy you?"

It was difficult to express dissatisfaction with a surrender so complete.

Chris relaxed something of the severity of her demeanour. "Only I wish," she remarked, "that I could make you feel a little ashamed of yourself. Don't you see that you ought to be merciful to animals who aren't big enough or strong enough to fight you?"

"They wouldn't know that unless they were taught it, and they know how to show fight, I can assure you. I've been bitten often enough."

"I am sincerely glad to hear it," Chris declared.

"Yes; but no dog has ever bitten me more than once. The long and the short of it is that they have to find out who is master. That's a nice little terrier of yours."

This last remark was pretty sure to be favourably received. Peter was called up and appeared to recognise a brother sportsman in the stalwart gentleman who made familiar little noises at him and sent him after an imaginary cat. Then Chris made friends with the setter, who crouched at her feet, looking up at her with piteous, beseeching eyes.

"Well," said his master, laughing, "he has had his last licking, anyhow. I don't suppose he'll ever be any use. Perhaps you would like to have him. If so —"

"Thank you," replied Chris gravely; "but you must not give him away, or you will have no opportunity of trying the experiment of kindness upon your animals. Besides, one dog is quite enough to keep in London."

"Do you live in London?"

"Yes. I am staying with Lady Barnstaple at present."

"Oh, old Lady Barnstaple! Is she here now? Upon my word, I ought to call on old Lady Barnstaple, and I will some day soon. My name is Ellacombe: I live at a place called Hatherford, close by this. What time would one be likely to find you at home?"

"To find Lady Barnstaple at home, do you mean? As a general thing,

between five and six o'clock, I should think."

"All right: I'll make a note of it. And look here, Miss—might I venture to ask your name?"

"Compton."

"Miss Compton, I hope you won't set me down as a brute because you happened to see me licking a dog. You won't hear much good of me from the Severnes, I dare say: most of the people about here hate me like poison, and I'm sure they're very welcome. 'But I ain't so bad as they make me out—I ain't really.'

Chris looked at him and thought that perhaps he was not altogether a brute, although there was evidently a strong spice of the brute in him. His forehead was low, his eyes were small, and his jaw was heavy; yet he seemed to be a gentleman, and he had a straightforwardness of manner which was not unpleasing. As, however, the result of her observation was scarcely flattering enough to be imparted to him, she contented herself with making him a bow and wishing him good evening.

On her way back to the house she met Lady Grace, who said she had been trying to arrange the dinner-table and had made a hopeless mess of it. "Would you mind coming in and helping me, Chris? As it is at present, it looks more like a slice of the kitchen-garden than anything else."

"Will there be many people tonight?" Chris asked.

"Oh, yes: a fresh batch has just arrived. Nobody particularly interesting, except my youngest brother Gerald, who has come here to pay his respects before going to Scotland. Gerald is in the diplomatic service: he is third secretary at Paris, and he has just got a few weeks' leave. He is much the nicest of my brothers, and I want to induce him to stay a short time, if I can, so perhaps I had better begin by putting him beside you at dinner."

Whether this arrangement, which

was duly carried out, produced the desired effect upon Mr. Severne or not, it was an agreeable one to Chris, who took a great liking to her neighbour. Gerald Severne was a well-dressed, well-mannered, and by no means ill-looking young fellow of five or six and twenty. He had the family fair hair, the family blue eyes, and a fairly good reproduction of the celebrated family profile. If he was not quite as handsome as his elder brothers, he had a pleasanter expression of countenance than they, and according to his mother he had the advantage over them in respect of qualities which are not merely skin-deep.

"Gerald," Lady Barnstaple confided to Chris before dinner, "is our good boy. He has never run into debt or made love to other people's wives or misbehaved himself in any way, and although it is dangerous to crow, I really don't believe that he ever will."

The good boy of the family is not always a fascinating person: sometimes he is very decidedly the reverse; and to be so described is a distinction little coveted by the young. But perhaps Gerald Severne was only good by comparison. He was at all events not so offensively good as to displease his companion, who listened to him with apparent interest, and in whom he, for his part, soon began to feel strongly interested. Discovering, as she presently did, that, like herself, he was a lover of dogs, she related to him how, that very afternoon, she had been instrumental in rescuing a beautiful Gordon setter from a method of treatment which could only result in ruining him; whereupon he disappointed her a little by answering: "Oh, I know the brute; and a hopelessly ill-conditioned brute he is."

"I don't think so," said Chris; "it seemed to me that he had only been misunderstood. If his master will keep his promise and have patience with him, he will find out what he is."

wanted to do and do it, just like other setters."

"I was speaking of the two-legged brute," answered Gerald, with a smile. "I have no doubt you are right about the other."

"Well," said Chris, "I shouldn't wonder if the two-legged brute had been misunderstood also. I thought him rather nice in some ways."

"Did you? I doubt whether you would go on thinking so if you got to know him better. I haven't seen much of him since he grew up, because I'm hardly ever in these parts nowadays; but I hear that he has developed into pretty much what he promised to develop into as a boy. He always was a boor, and now they say he is a drunken boor, which doesn't sound like an improvement. However, you are not likely to come across him again; for he doesn't care to associate with people of his own class, and nobody ever meets him, except perhaps once or twice during the shooting-season."

"He says he is coming to call here some day soon," Chris remarked.

Mr. Severne whistled. "He does, does he? I'm afraid we mustn't flatter ourselves that that amiable intention is due to any charms of ours. Well, Miss Compton, if you succeed in taming him, you will succeed where everybody else has failed up to now."

"What monster has Chris been taking in hand?" inquired Lady Barnstaple, whom a pause in the general conversation had enabled to overhear her son's last words. And when an explanation had been furnished to her she laughed and did not look displeased. "Mr. Ellacombe is a bear," said she; "but I dare say he can be made to dance if the right person pipes to him."

Gerald shrugged his shoulders and remarked, "I can't imagine that it would be worth any one's while to pipe to Ellacombe, or to see him dance."

But his mother rejoined : " My dear boy, he has a very nice property. A great many people, I believe, have thought it worth while to try and put him through his paces ; only, as you were saying just now, they haven't succeeded, and that has naturally embittered them against him. Most likely he isn't half as black as he is painted. I hope you told him that I should be very glad to see him, Chris ? "

" I told him that you were generally at home at tea-time," answered Chris.

" Oh, he wanted to find me at home, then ? After that, the least we can do is to ask him to dinner," said Lady Barnstaple laughing.

Lady Barnstaple was a kind-hearted woman, not more worldly than her neighbours, and, like her neighbours, given to valuing all bachelors by the standard of their possessions. Mr. Ellacombe, who was but a country squire, albeit a wealthy one, would hardly have suited her as a husband for one of her own daughters ; but she thought—and of course she was in one sense right—that he would be a great catch for this poor little friendless girl. What matrimonial chances can there be for a girl who lives with an old maiden aunt in the neighbourhood of Primrose Hill ? Lady Barnstaple was really fond of Chris : she had after a fashion undertaken to befriend her, and she quite conscientiously thought that she would be doing remarkably well for the orphan by handing her over to a man who was a notorious drunkard and about whose moral character some unpleasant stories had been circulated in the county. It seems a little unfair to add—and yet it is probably the truth—that her ladyship would not have been very sorry if Miss Compton's early marriage should render it unnecessary to present her at Court and introduce her to London society. Which of us knows all his own motives or could be got to believe in them, if pointed out to him ? So Lady

Barnstaple said to herself that a great many men begin by taking more wine than is good for them and get out of that and other bad habits when they are provided with a good wife. As for the unpleasant stories, they might be true, or untrue, or partially true. It is best not to inquire too closely into these things, thought Lady Barnstaple, who had not been brought up in a particularly straitlaced school.

Thus it is that elderly ladies are wont complacently to settle the destinies of their juniors, forgetting that they too were once young, and that at that time they were convinced of nothing more profoundly than of their right to settle their own destinies for themselves. While this elderly and short-sighted lady was seated in the drawing-room, keeping up perfunctory conversation with certain of her friends and thinking with self-approval how kind she was going to be to poor little Chris Compton, her youngest son, her Benjamin, whom she proposed to marry in due season to somebody good enough for him—to somebody, that is, who should combine the advantages of rank, beauty, and fortune—was strolling up and down the terrace outside with the impoverished orphan aforesaid, and was becoming more and more certain every minute that he had at last met his true affinity. He was not inexperienced : he had met with a host of women at home and abroad who had been accounted lovely and fascinating ; and if he had not fallen a victim to the charms of any of them it was because he had always had his own feminine ideal. And here, at this improbable time and place, had appeared the realisation of it ! It was really a bad look-out for him as well as for Lady Barnstaple ; for the allowance made him by his father was only a modest one, and he had never been in the habit of denying himself any luxuries.

As for Chris, Mr. Severne was no more to her than an exceedingly pleasant young fellow whose tastes

and ways of thinking coincided with her own. She had no idea that she was doing anything at all out of the way by walking and sitting with him on the terrace there, looking down upon the moonlit sea and the dark outlines of the woods and cliffs.

But perhaps a different opinion was entertained by Lady Grace, who came out of the house at last and who said, with a perceptible ring of anxiety in her voice, "My dear Gerald, do you know that it is eleven o'clock? What have you been doing all this time?"

"Miss Compton and I," replied Gerald, "have been having a most delightful conversation. We have been comparing notes as to what we should do if we had ten thousand a year apiece, and the odd thing is that we are quite agreed at all points. We should live somewhere down here in Devonshire: we should do a little hunting in the Midlands during the winter: we should buy up all the lost dogs at Battersea, and"—

"What nonsense!" interrupted Lady Grace a trifle impatiently. "I don't believe either of you would do anything of the sort, and I know one of you who is very unlikely to have ten thousand a year until he is a gouty old ambassador. Meanwhile, how long are you going to stay with us, Gerald? Can you spare us three days?"

"I feel very much inclined to spare you three weeks," was the unexpected reply, to which Lady Grace did not respond with the enthusiastic gratitude which she would have expressed some hours earlier.

#### CHAPTER VI.

SOME people find out how to ride instinctively, just as some people know how to play the piano and others know how to draw or paint. In all of these arts there is, of course, a great deal which can only be acquired by instruction; but in all there is something, too, which can never be taught, and with-

out which proficiency in any one of them is absolutely unattainable. Chris had had very little equestrian tuition; but she had a firm seat, plenty of nerve and a light hand; all of which gifts were duly recognised and admired by Gerald Severne the first day that he went out riding with her.

"I really know nothing about it," she said, in answer to some complimentary remarks of his; "but it isn't very difficult to stick on a horse's back, and I can generally get on with them, because I understand how they feel."

"Ah," laughed Gerald, "that's the secret. One could get on with most animals, even with human beings, if one only understood how they felt. Unfortunately the lower animals can't tell us, and the humans won't."

"I don't see why they shouldn't," Chris declared. "The humans, I mean."

"Nor do I; and it would simplify existence immensely if they would. But unless everybody agreed to play the game, it would hardly do for one of us to begin, would it? If I were to tell you how I am feeling at this moment, for instance, you probably wouldn't believe me, and I am not sure that you would be pleased with me."

"I don't mind telling you how I am feeling," returned Chris: "I am feeling perfectly happy."

That sounded like a satisfactory announcement; but she spoilt the effect of it a little by explaining, "My idea of perfect happiness is to be riding a spirited horse over a grass country on a breezy day." Besides, it was rather disappointing that she should manifest no curiosity as to the condition of mind which he had professed himself reluctant to reveal.

"Company, I suppose," he remarked, after a pause, "is a secondary consideration?"

"Quite secondary," she replied laughing. "However, I don't complain of yours."

It must not be supposed that it was in the company of Mr. Severne alone that Chris was exploring the moorlands which dominate Brentstow. Lady Barnstaple, unsuspicuous though she was, would never have countenanced such a proceeding as that ; and a couple of hundred yards or so in the rear of this couple Lady Grace was entertaining an elderly nobleman, who said he enjoyed a gallop as much as anybody, but didn't see the fun of making yourself and your horse hot by pounding along at racing speed over treacherous ground, like a cockney on Hampstead Heath. Thus our heroine and her cavalier were efficiently chaperoned and at the same time left entirely to their own devices, which is a happy state of things permitted by the conventionalities of this country, and largely taken advantage of by those to whom it applies.

These young people, who, after all, were little more than a boy and a girl, had a half-mile race, which was won triumphantly by Chris, and which Gerald rode after a fashion which his backers, if he had had any, would perhaps have felt justified in inviting him to explain. Then they drew rein and returned at a foot's pace towards their companions, who said it was time to go home, but who did not interrupt their *île-à-tête* for long. Lady Grace, it is true, made a feeble attempt to join her brother, and shift a burden which properly belonged to her on to the shoulders of her friend ; but to such a change of partners it is essential that there should be at least two consenting parties, and Gerald was so quietly obstinate in his resistance, that there was nothing for it but to let him do as he wished.

"I'm afraid Gracie has been having rather a slow afternoon," he remarked to Chris, when they were once more alone ; "but it can't be helped. Somebody must talk to that old duffer, and I don't see why it should be you or I."

"I doubt whether it would interest

him to be talked to by me," said Chris ; "but I am sure he would be glad to hear all about French politics from you. I heard him saying at dinner last night that our relations with France were in a far more dangerous condition than is generally imagined."

"If that is the case, I mustn't venture to approach him. I should be sure to let out some state secret, and then I should get into a terrible row. Thank you very much for warning me."

So this cautious young diplomatist remained out of temptation's way, and prolonged for another quarter of an hour an interview in which neither caution nor diplomacy were conspicuously displayed. Chris and he, having cantered on ahead, had reached the gates of Brentstow when they descried a horseman advancing towards them across the park. He was apparently upon bad terms with his mount, a gigantic chestnut, who was plunging, rearing and bucking, and receiving in return a castigation as heavy as a heavy arm and whip could make it.

"Our friend, or rather your friend, Ellacombe," remarked Gerald. "I suppose he has been up to call, and is punishing his horse because nobody was at home."

Whatever may have been Mr. Ellacombe's motive for punishing his horse, he ceased doing so the moment that he caught sight of Chris, and the chestnut at once ceased plunging. "Sorry to have missed you, Miss Compton," he called out as soon as he was within speaking distance. "I thought you said you were always in at five o'clock."

"I said you would generally find Lady Barnstaple at home at that hour," answered Chris.

"Oh!" grunted Mr. Ellacombe, who looked sullen and dissatisfied. "Well, she isn't at home to-day, anyhow." And then, after a prolonged stare, "Isn't that Gerald Severne?"

Gerald urbanely acknowledged his identity, adding, "It's a good many

years since we met last, and I don't wonder at your not being sure of me. I knew you like a shot ; but then you are an unchangeable sort of person—particularly in your style of riding. Your elbow doesn't seem to have lost any of its power."

Ellacombe threw him an angry glance, which he would probably have followed up by an angry word or two if at this moment Lady Grace had not joined the group, attended by her mature cavalier. Lady Grace, no doubt, took in the situation at a glance, and had her reasons for being polite to a man whom she particularly disliked ; for she greeted Mr. Ellacombe quite cordially, and begged him to turn back and have a cup of tea with them, which invitation he at once accepted.

"Tea isn't very much in your line, is it, Ellacombe ?" asked Gerald, with an innocent air.

"As much as it is in yours, I dare say," returned the other, scowling at his interrogator ominously.

Evidently the two men were ready to quarrel upon the smallest provocation. They went on sparring together all the way back to the house, and continued doing so after the whole party had dismounted and had grouped itself round the tea-table on the lawn, while the cause of their strife remained neutral and indifferent, being less interested in either of them than in making Peter climb up on to her shoulder and take a biscuit off her hat, an accomplishment which he had lately acquired, and of which he was pardonly proud.

After a time Lady Barnstaple returned from her drive, and getting out of the carriage, came forward to welcome her neighbour, which she did with unusual warmth. She would perhaps have pleased him a little better if she had not addressed him as "Mr. Widdicombe" ; but one can't be expected to remember the exact name of a man to whom one has not spoken for three or four years, and but

for that trifling slip, her ladyship's graciousness would have left nothing to be desired.

Ellacombe rode away at length, with a strong and perfectly correct impression that the Brentstow people wished to cultivate him ; and as soon as he had departed Gerald exclaimed rather irritably, "My dear mother, what possessed you to be so civil to that oaf !"

But in truth he knew as well as anybody what had possessed her, and the knowledge was far from being agreeable to him. How is it, he wondered, that good and kind-hearted women can complacently form projects from which even the coarsest of men would shrink back ashamed ? The problem is one which has puzzled many observers besides Gerald Severne, and perhaps it has never been quite satisfactorily solved.

For the rest, it did not seem very probable that Miss Compton would lend herself to Lady Barnstaple's atrocious designs, and in a few hours Gerald was able to forget the existence of the obnoxious Ellacombe. To be in love is not, as everybody knows, unmixed bliss ; yet it compares not unfavourably with other forms of human happiness, at all events during those golden days which mark the earlier stages of the passion. When the questions of marriage, of settlements and of communicating to one's friends the fact that one is no longer a free agent obtrude themselves, the alloy becomes as apparent as the true metal ; but who thinks of troubling his head with such prosaic possibilities while he has as yet hardly ventured to dream that his love may some time be returned ?

So Gerald Severne had his golden days like other people, and made the most of them. He rode with Chris : he sailed with her in the little half-decked cutter which his mother owned, but never used : he played lawn-tennis with her against all comers, and was uniformly victorious. Afterwards he

thought that he had never enjoyed life one hundredth part as much as he did during these days, although at the time they had their drawbacks. Chris was friendly with him ; but he could not flatter himself that she was anything more, and he made acquaintance with the pangs of jealousy ; for there were young men as well as old ones among Lady Barnstaple's guests, and the young men seemed to appreciate Miss Compton's charms.

One afternoon a prawning-party, consisting of Chris, Gerald, Lady Grace, and a certain Lord Forfar, who was youthful, wealthy, and the heir-apparent to a marquisate, was organised with the approval of Lady Barnstaple, who thought that her daughter could not go prawning in better company and was curiously blind to the dangers incurred by her son. Prawning is not bad fun for those who have taken the precaution to put on wading-boots, but it is a form of sport in which ladies can hardly participate with comfort ; and perhaps that was why Lord Forfar and Mr. Severne did not secure a very heavy bag. For form's sake they paddled about a while among the pools and rocks ; but before very long they agreed that it was too hot for that sort of thing, and returned to the ladies, whom they had left under the shadow of the cliffs. Then, as was to be expected, they split into pairs, and Chris, accompanied by Mr. Severne, wandered along the shore to a promontory whence the coast for miles to the northward and southward was visible, and Lundy Island could be despaired upon the misty horizon.

There they seated themselves upon a broad, flat rock, while Peter barked furiously at the breakers ; and there they would have contentedly remained for any length of time if they had not been startled by the sudden skimming past them of a stone, which had evidently been thrown from the cliff above.

"Confound that fellow !" exclaimed Gerald, jumping up ; " he might have

cut your head open. Hi ! there,—stop shying stones, will you, unless you would like me to come up and teach you a lesson in manners !"

" Hi, yourself ! " responded a powerful voice from above. " Do you know you're trespassing ? "

" I do believe it's that brute Ellacombe again," muttered Gerald. " Hang him ! he's always turning up." Then he shouted : " Don't you be too sure of that. I may be wrong ; but my impression is that this rock is the property of the Crown."

Mr. Ellacombe — for he it undoubtedly was, and his magnificent proportions were clearly defined against the sky — responded by an unintelligible bellow : immediately after which he was seen descending the face of the cliff precipitately by a zigzag path, dislodging small avalanches of pebbles on his way. As soon as he was within speaking distance of Chris he began a breathless apology.

" I'm awfully sorry, Miss Compton — I can't tell you how sorry I am ! The truth is, I took you for a couple of those beastly tourists who come here to picnic, and leave their scraps of greasy paper and chicken-bones and things all over the place, don't you know."

" I suppose that must be what we look like," observed Chris meekly. " One isn't flattered, but one is glad to know the truth."

" Are you in the habit of stoning stray tourists ? " Gerald inquired. " If you are, and if you often hit them, I should think you would find it rather an expensive amusement."

" Oh, I knew I shouldn't hit you," Ellacombe answered. " I didn't intend to do that : I only wanted to attract your attention. And as for your looking like tourists, Miss Compton, I assure you you didn't look like anything from up there. All I saw was a couple of strangers, and of course, I never thought of its being you, alone with — with my friend Severne."

The last words were spoken so

savagely that Chris began to laugh ; whereupon Gerald laughed also, and finally Ellacombe himself joined in a dubious sort of way in their merriment.

" Well," resumed the latter, after a pause, " since you *are* here, I hope you'll come up and have a look at my old barrack. There isn't much to show you ; but the housekeeper will get you some tea, and you can walk home across the fields. It won't take you five minutes to get up the cliff," he added persuasively.

Gerald looked reluctant ; but Chris thought she would rather like to see Hatherford Manor, and as at that time Chris enjoyed an absolutely despotic power over both men, it was not long before they were mounting the path by which Mr. Ellacombe had effected his rapid descent. From the summit of the cliff they descried Lord Forfar and Lady Grace, to whom they made signals to join them ; and so, after a walk of about a quarter of an hour, the whole party entered that bare and desolate drawing-room where Mr. Ellacombe's mother had been wont to receive the neighbouring nobility and gentry in days gone by.

The present owner of Hatherford had not been unduly modest in stating that he had little to show his friends therein. It was a large and rather sombre edifice, built of grey stone, and surrounded by a neglected garden. The exterior was more or less imposing by reason of its size ; but the reception-rooms had not even that merit. To be sure, there were a good many of them, but they were comparatively small, they had low ceilings, they were shabbily furnished, and had a dreary, uninhabited look.

" I live in my own den : I never put my nose in here from year's end to year's end," Ellacombe explained apologetically, as he conducted Chris through the ground-floor suite and pointed out to her a few pictures which he said were " considered good by the fellows who know about those things."

" I don't wonder at it," returned Chris frankly. " I wouldn't live all by myself in a huge place like this for any money."

" Well," said Ellacombe, " I don't know that I particularly enjoy living alone ; but I dare say it's a little better than marrying some woman who doesn't know a horse from a cow, or a spaniel from a bull-dog."

Chris agreed that perhaps it was ; whereupon her interlocutor heaved a prodigious sigh and remarked, " It would be different if all women were like you, Miss Compton."

The entrance of the butler with the tea-tray interrupted a colloquy which threatened to become embarrassing. Lady Grace poured out the tea, and very bad tea it was. Probably it was a beverage not often asked for in that house.

" I'm afraid it's too weak, or too strong, or something," Ellacombe said anxiously. " I'm not a tea-drinker myself."

Perhaps it was rather rude of Gerald Severne to break into an abrupt laugh at this speech ; but Gerald, poor fellow, was not in the best of humours. While Chris was being shown the Claudes and Rembrandts collected by some defunct Ellacombe of artistic proclivities, he had been wandering about the drawing-room, and had been annoyed by the sight of a printed invitation-card which lay upon one of the tables : " The Countess of Barnstaple requests the pleasure of Mr. Ellacombe's company at dinner, on Thursday, the 10th inst., at eight o'clock." To Gerald this missive appeared altogether uncalled-for, and he began to doubt whether his mother was the superior woman that he had always hitherto imagined her to be. He said to himself : " It's downright disgusting ! Fancy making up to a drunken sweep like that just because he has a few thousands a year ! She must know perfectly well, too, that he isn't fit to associate with any lady."

So when Mr. Ellacombe confessed that he didn't like tea, Gerald Severne

laughed offensively, and the laugh was followed by an uncomfortable interval of silence. Chris probably did not understand why her entertainer scowled so ferociously; but during the succeeding quarter of an hour she could not help seeing that Gerald was trying hard to pick a quarrel with him, which made her treat him with more cordiality than she might otherwise have shown.

By the time that Ellacombe had exhibited his stables and kennels he was in high spirits, and felt that he could afford to pity and despise his rival. "I shall see you again on

Thursday," he said to Chris, when he shook hands with her and bade her good-bye: "I'm going to dine at your place."

As the party walked away, Gerald muttered something which Chris did not catch, and which she begged him to repeat. He did not see fit to comply with her request, so she remarked: "I think you are rather ill-natured. Mr. Ellacombe seems to me to be a rough diamond."

"Then the sooner he is cut the better," retorted Gerald, with a brilliant flash of wit, which somehow failed to provoke any appreciative laughter.

*(To be continued)*

